WHERE AUTHORS BECOME WRITERS by George Arliss

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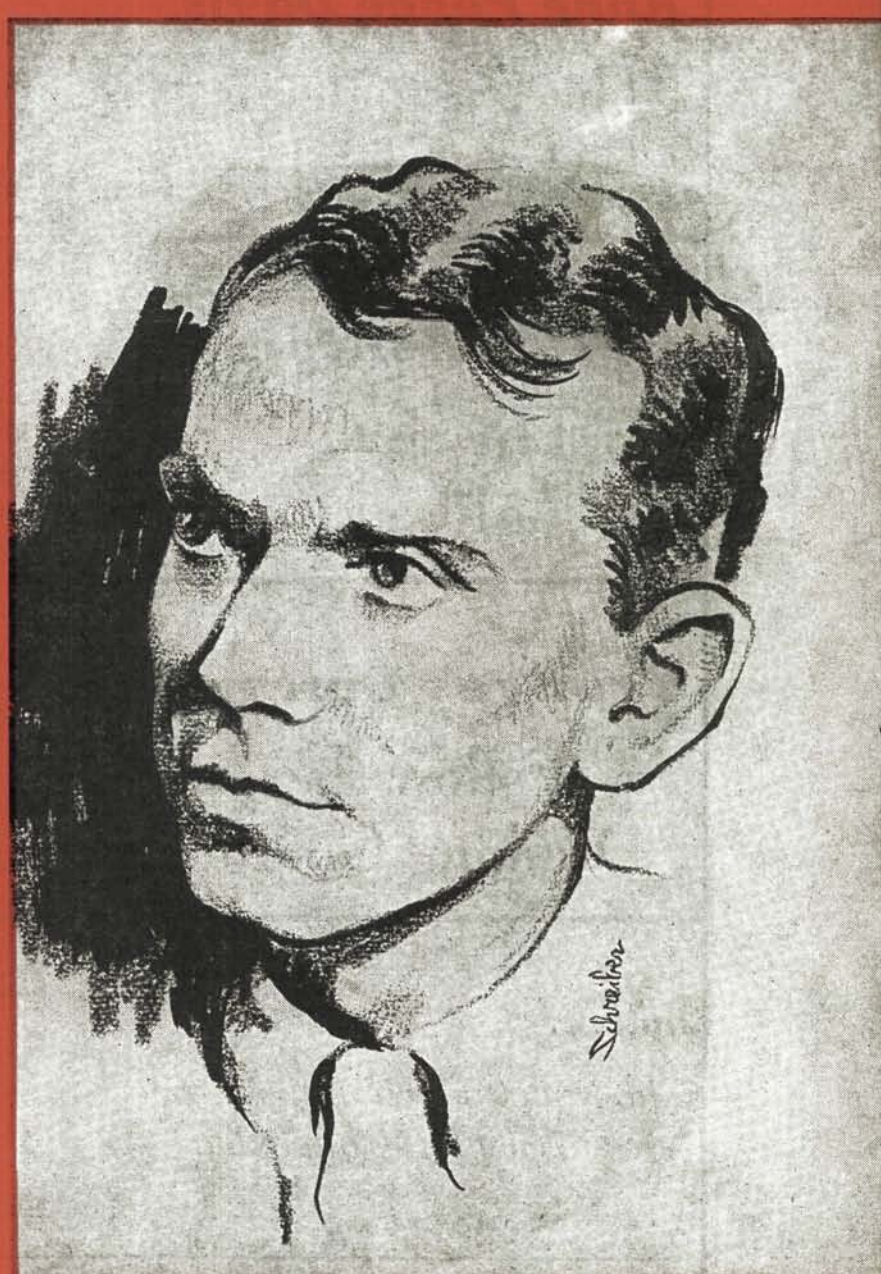

GRAHAM GREENE: "This distant cousin of Robert Louis Stevenson seems to have what it takes" . . . *(See page 5)*

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Drawings by Stonehill

Franklin D. Roosevelt: New Deal Author No. 1.

PROSE AND POLITICS

Writers in the New Deal

BY BLAIR BOLLES

Eleanor Roosevelt: Literary First Lady.

IN Washington the cry of "Author!" will flush a good covey from among the more elevated officials of the federal government. The President himself will rise to the call, with Mrs. Roosevelt. Half the Cabinet will rise —Postmaster General Farley, Secretary of the Interior Ickes, Secretary of Labor Perkins, Secretary of Commerce Hopkins, and, most striking, the Secretary of Agriculture Wallace.

Beyond these celebrated names in the White House and the Cabinet the New Deal catalogue of authors runs into the hundreds. The Roosevelt Administration, which marked its seventh birthday March 4, has been a writers' carnival. Printed prose has not been so much a part of politics since the eighteenth century. The New Deal has put on the government's payroll a great array of thinkers with incompatible notions, with the result that the Administration frequently has proclaimed incompatible policies. In one respect these writers are all similar: each raised an articulate cry against the way of life and the system of government brought to their ripest fruiting under Herbert Hoover. Some of them had been preaching their doctrine long before 1932, even long before the crash. The more intellectual of these writers contributed the political conceptions which we accept as the abecedaria of the New Deal opinion of democracy: government spending to provide the more abundant life for all; government for the people by a few expert people; central governmental direction of an integrated national economy and society.

Some familiarity with six New Deal writers acquaints us with the intellectual basis of the Roosevelt revolution. Felix Frankfurter, Henry Wallace, Jerome Frank, Herman Oliphant, Rexford Tugwell, and Thurman Arnold (four lawyers, one economist, one farm editor, all but the farm editor teachers) are the philosophers who prompted Franklin Roosevelt to climb a political peak in Darien and drove him to exploration far into the new world they showed him. In that new world they and the President and the inventors of governmental procedures which were designed to make operable the new thought planted the seeds for what Dr. Frankfurter in another connection termed "the exuberant efflorescence of congressional lawmaking." Their books begat statutes. One of the six, Oliphant, is dead, and another, Tugwell, left the New Deal long ago. But their mark on the system is so sharp that they demand consideration.

Thurman Arnold's value in the group comes as much from his wit as from his intelligence. In "The Folklore of Capitalism" Arnold dealt thrusts at the traditional conceits about the sphere of the American government and the nature of American society which the others made esoterically impressive for Mr. Roosevelt. Mr. Arnold is a lively debunker, the fluent, almost glib doubter of the accepted fairy tales about the pattern of our economic existence. He popularizes New Dealism by making a joke of Old Dealism. But he lacks the influence of a man like Frankfurter, who is now a Supreme Court Justice and just as unobtrusively authoritative with the executive branch of the government as he was when he was lecturing on the law at Harvard.

Frankfurter could never match Arnold by writing a best-seller. But before Roosevelt moved to Washington in 1933, Frankfurter was supplying him with a derogatory opinion of past notions of government's limits—"we have not adjusted our thinking about government to the overwhelming facts of modern life"—and with a determination to make government truly "one of the energies of civilization." These quotations come from "The Public and Its Government," which Frankfurter published a decade ago, or two years before Roosevelt was elected President, and which today has a standing as a sort of Bible for students of the New Deal's origins.

For seven years Frankfurter has been Mr. Roosevelt's philosophical dependence for asserting in this country the argument advanced forty-five years ago in England by Lord Randolph Churchill that "the good of the State . . . stands far above the validity of contract." Frankfurter's merit for Roosevelt lies in his ability to show the companionability of political democracy and political change. "Democracy is the reign of reason on the most extensive scale," he wrote in 1930. The chief obstructionists to the exercise of reason were the judges. Change in the nature of society, which is inevitable, must be accompanied by change in statutes; at once comes the question, are the statutes constitutional? "In simple truth, the difficulties that government encounters from law do not inhere in the Constitution. They are due to the judges who interpret it." In Frankfurter, Roosevelt,

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liberal by nature, groping for a philosophical foundation on which to erect a liberal government, found the source of strength and daring that moved him in 1937 to give to Congress his plan for changing the Supreme Court. Since then the court has grown so amenable to Roosevelt that the president of the American Bar Association accused it of destroying those liberties cherished by the believers in the fairy tale which drew Thurman Arnold's scoffs.

From Frankfurter, moreover, Roosevelt received the inspiration to crowd the federal government's payroll with experts. "If government is to be equal to its responsibilities," Frankfurter wrote, "it must draw more and more on men of skill and wisdom for public administration." Acting on Frankfurter's fluent advocacy of an ennobled public service staffed with excellent men is one of the chief passions of Tom Corcoran, the great cog in the New Deal machine which Frankfurter and others constructed and put into motion. These men "of skill and wisdom" employed through Corcoran insure the preservation of a sympathy for the New Deal among the sub-administrators of the New Deal, among the thousands of lawyers and economists and personnel supervisors on the official rolls in Washington and in Washington's branch offices about the country. During an earnest luncheon conversation, Herman Oliphant once observed that the successful and competent working of government depends on the unhonored employees ranking above the clerks and below the administrators. Their attitude and efficiency can make or break the administration of a given policy.

Oliphant's remarks drew attention because he spoke from experience. He joined the government in 1933 and remained with it until he died in 1939. He fashioned the excess profits tax, whose purpose was a better division of riches among all the American people. He was a good deal more than a deviser of governmental methodology. He was the Giant Mind of the Treasury Department, which knew him officially as General Counsel. He was a pioneer among the untrodden ways of law, a scholarly debunker. He made government financing a paternalistic operation. He discovered for Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau and President Roosevelt why unbalanced budgets were legally and economically poised. He was interested as a realist, sympathetic with man's true nature, no matter how noble or base it might be.

Oliphant was much taken with the vast difference he noted between men's notions of things and the facts about things. Reflections along this course made him by nature a New Dealist, from the standpoint set forth by Frankfurter that our thinking about government is unadjusted to "the overwhelming facts of modern life." One of the best and most entertaining witnesses to Oliphant's agreement with Frankfurter is a paragraph in "The Public and the Law." There Oliphant writes:

> In all departments of life there is a very wide divergence between actual conduct and rule of supposed conduct. For example, if it ever occurs to some generation of students of ethics temporarily to forego the task of perfecting idealized codes of moral conduct and to undertake the more difficult but not less exciting task of accurately describing how the overwhelming mass of men actually behave, in the ordinary matters of daily life having ethical implications, and thus to give us a true picture of how men really conduct themselves, as opposed to how they ought to act, the realization of the extent of the divergence between actual conduct and supposed rule will come to many of us as a distinct shock.

Tugwell was one who contemplated ethics. He brought to Washington an ethical-economic prescription: "When industry is government and government is industry, the dual conflict deepest in our modern institutions will be abated." The fierceness of Tugwell's revolutionary writing (he was "sick of properties czars, sick of a nation's stenches"), combined with his haughty faith in his own ideas, his coldness, and his bad manners, cost him his position with the Administration (Under Secretary of Agriculture, Resettlement Administrator) three years ago. But it still bears his imprint.

Drawing by Renato

"Henry A. Wallace wants none of Utopia; he will be satisfied with a parity price."

He was foremost among the planners. It was his idea that through the workings of planning for society man soon would be living for the mass of men. Free business enterprise he regarded as the twentieth century enemy of man. In a temperate form this opinion still has great weight with President Roosevelt. Early in his life Tugwell picked up the thought that somehow American business is immoral. He feels that business dominates, controls, and cabins the individual. Government is the agency of individual liberty, even though the price of liberty is restriction within such boundaries of individualistic freedom as government imposes. Thus he wrote in "Social Objectives of Education" that the various economic forces at work in our industrial age are "leading us into an era in which the individual is to find himself only through functioning in a group, in which the interests of each are likely to become the interests of all, in which the institutions of preindustrial America will be definitely obsolete and will be superseded by others which now are emerging from the chaos of transition."

Henry Wallace disapproved of Tugwell's cerebral exhibitionism and he never had much use for the ethical basis of Tugwell's ideas. To as great an extent as he could, Wallace kept Under Secretary Tugwell administering the details of the farm program in order to limit the time he could devote to promoting his points of view. The Secretary of Agriculture's writings make it clear that he is assured not so much of the evil of the American industrial economic system as of its unworkability. Tugwell, typifying the real New Deal spirit, was led into his way of thought primarily by compassion, by a desire to have all men happy and well-fed. He was a frustrated Utopian who saw in business the demon barring the road to heaven. Wallace is a pragmatist. He wants none of Utopia; he will be satisfied with a parity price for the farmer. In his quest for a key to agrarian prosperity he has learned that the first discovery must be the key to national economic stability. This search has led him into pensive consideration of the economic structure of all society, here and abroad. Out of his ponderings about how to deal adequately with what is, Wallace has evolved a complete political system. He is the

(*Continued on page* 17)

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Earthly and Heavenly Quarry

THE LABYRINTHINE WAYS. By Graham Greene. New York: The Viking Press. 1940. 301 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

I HAVE read most of the novels of Graham Greene since "The Man Within." This distant cousin of Robert Louis Stevenson increasingly seems to have what it takes. His novels are of action, dealing with peculiarities of psychology. His protagonists might as well be anonymous, sometimes are. No man writing today is more a master of suspense. And this one can strike terror to your soul. Besides novels, Mr. Greene has done several entirely unconventional books of travel, and a story of the agent of the Spanish Loyalists in "The Confidential Agent." It is the travel book "Another Mexico" which has familiarized Mr. Greene with the background of "The Labyrinthine Ways," and, indeed, inspired this story.

In a state where the Church has for centuries reigned supreme, a revolution and a socialistic government (presumably) are making a clean sweep of priestcraft. Through "The Labyrinthine Ways," a fugitive from the State, flees the anonymous priest who is the centre of the story. He fares through terror, pity, furtive acceptance of the sacrament, squalor, hate, and sympathy, to betrayal by a miserable whining mestizo. All his human failings are laid bare—his mistress and his child, his fear and cowardice, his smugness of yore as of a ruling class, his bewilderment in the face of life—and yet, somehow, through it all, he clings to that strange spiritual possession that makes something in his faith more noble than the life through which he moves in dire need and fear.

The priest is no martyr and no hero, but in the end he wins our sympathy. In the terrible jail scene in the middle of the book, when he becomes more a man than ever in his life before, he says to the miserable people about him: "My children, you must never think the holy martyrs are like me. You have a name for me. Oh, I've heard you use it before now. I am a whisky priest. I am in here now because they found a bottle of brandy in my pocket." But the reason he had the brandy was because he was trying to buy some bootleg wine from the Governor's cousin, to be used for sacramental purposes. The terrible irony of that night, when they drank up the wine that he had bought, is a great scene.

In fact, I am not at all sure that the late Victor Hugo would not have acclaimed, not only the drama of the hounded man in this story of Mr. Greene's, but also his understanding of the inner stress of responsibility in the priest's soul. For the priest is anointed; he is not actually fleeing God as the poet was in Francis Thompson's "Hound of Heaven," he is fleeing his own fear, praying desperately to preserve his loyalty to the greatest thing he knows, with all mankind, as it seems to him, arrayed against him, and no rest for the sole of his foot. He is trying still to carry the Host in his hands for the preservation of the souls of the ignorant and simple whose souls are in his keeping. And, at the same time, before his eyes, he sees the child of his loins staring at him like a soulless animal.

I have never been in Mexico, but the atmosphere and detail of this book are convincing. So are the variegated people. So are the squalor and the heat and the venality of man, the sloth and the violence. And Mr. Greene has told the story of a truly spiritual struggle, in the breast of a miserable sinner, who can yet do brave things, in a fashion that sets this novel of his a little above and apart from his others. Also, he has now proved himself one of the finest craftsmen of story-telling in our time.

Mural by Diego Rivera
Portrait of Mexico

"A Wanderer in Woodcuts," by H. Glintenkamp.

ScandinavianCanvas

THE KING'S MEN. By Johan Bojer. Translated from the Norwegian by Barrows Mussey. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. 1940. 349 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by MARIANNE HAUSER

BOJER'S new novel is composed with detailed precision. It is like a large sixteenth-century canvas, with its many figures neatly outlined against a carefully painted background. There is a great variety of people in this book; the pages are delightfully alive with common soldiers, officers, peasant girls, and small-town folks, all of them vividly colored like the fjords, the sea, and the wide Scandinavian sky. Bojer's interest in people, his love of nature, stand out as brightly as ever. There is, however, little of the emotional suspense we admired in "The Great Hunger." "The King's Men" is a team book, and too often on the idyllic side.

The subject as such is by no means idyllic. Bojer describes army life during the critical years when Norway was struggling away from the Union which had tied her to Sweden for almost a hundred years. The Union had been much to Norway's disadvantage. In 1905 she declared herself independent. It seemed that war would break out between Sweden and Norway. Only at the very last moment the two countries came to a peaceful agreement.

A threatening war, growing tension among the population, a clash of old and modern ideas and ideals are dramatic enough themes. Bojer develops them with competence, yet in parts so leisurely that the dramatic line looses itself amidst ornamental accessories.

Most of the characters are drawn firmly, sometimes with masterful strokes. Like Hamsun, Bojer has the rare and Scandinavian gift of making his people live and act. He does not share Hamsun's novelistic conciseness. "The King's Men" requires from the reader much leisure, and much patience too.

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Mr. Bates's Monument

AMERICAN FAITH: ITS RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC FOUNDATIONS. By Ernest Sutherland Bates. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1940. 478 *pp., with index.* $3.75.

Reviewed by CRANE BRINTON

EVEN with its subtitle included, the scope and nature of this book are not at once apparent from its title. It is not quite an intellectual history of the United States from the earliest settlements to the Civil War, for it excludes natural science and scholarship, and touches literature and the social sciences only as they influence what Ernest Sutherland Bates calls "American Faith." It is something more—and less—than a history of religion in the United States. Yet the book has unity. Perhaps, if Croly had not already appropriated the title, Bates might have called it "The Promise of American Life." He is interested above all in trying to trace a pattern in the conflicting efforts of men in this country to lead what they regarded as a good life. He finds that pattern in American democracy—no simple thing, but a compound of only partly reconciled ends—religious, political, economic.

The groundwork of his pattern he finds in the Europe of the Reformation. The first settlers brought with them not only their household goods and their occupational skills, but also ideals and ambitions for which a key must be sought in the work of men like Luther, Calvin, Fox, and Penn. In New England, in Pennsylvania, and in the old South, the settlers established societies whose form was determined by the interplay of the new environment and the old social inheritances. Then, in the conquest of the frontier, still other forces came into play, while on the seaboard further fertilization from the Europe of eighteenth-century rationalism and nineteenth-century romanticism added to the richness of our intellectual life and the complexity of our American faith.

Religious and political leaders like Winthrop, Roger Williams, Penn, Franklin, Paine, Asbury, Owen, the New England transcendentalists, give Bates most of his material, but he never writes of these men in the vacuum of pure ideas. He is always interested in what seems to have moved common men, in ideas as part of the intellectual baggage of ordinary Americans. The wilder sects, the seekers after an incredible perfection, fascinate him, and he manages to bring most of them — Shakers, Rappites, Fouriéristes, Mormons, Millerites, and many more—into a book of moderate compass. And though he makes no attempt at a systematic treatment of the varieties of American protestantism, he makes very clear how numerous and how picturesque they were. "Hard-Shell," "Soft-Shell," "Truthful," "Lying" — these are all Baptists, and only a beginning.

Like every generation in the Faustian world, ours is rewriting its history. Especially in American intellectual history, we have recently had a number of books written with critical freshness, and based on new material. "American Faith" is not one of these, but it is a good book and a useful one. Mr. Bates, though he has read widely and thoroughly, makes no attempt at what the professionals call a "contribution to knowledge." He is frankly writing a partial survey of American religious and political opinion, and he has the necessary gift of good, clear, lively exposition to do this well. He is not unbiased, and makes no claim to be. He prefers Anne Hutchinson and Roger Williams to John Winthrop, Rhode Island to Massachusetts Bay, Paine and Jefferson to Hamilton, Main Street to Wall Street. On the whole, he keeps his temper even with Boston; though "prurient" does not seem quite the required adjective for Winthrop. It may be that the people, the ways of life, the "faith" he dislikes are as American as those he doesn't like. Certainly a good many Americans would feel that Winthrop's reply to Mrs. Hutchinson when she pled freedom of conscience was rather more than Bates's "plausible": "Your conscience you may keep to yourself. But if your conscience comes into act, you must be called in question for it, and that is not for your conscience but for your practice." At any rate an America largely composed of people like Anne Hutchinson would probably not have lasted long enough for Bates to write about it.

Ernest Sutherland Bates "makes no attempt at a contribution to knowledge."

It is good to know that Ernest Sutherland Bates was able to complete this book just before his recent death. It was entirely finished, ready for the publisher, and has not had to undergo completion and editing at another's hands, always an ungrateful process. It is a skillful piece of popularizing, not vulgarizing, fully up to the level of his earlier works.

Speculative Genius

JONATHAN EDWARDS 1703-1758. By Ola Elizabeth Winslow. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1940. 406 *pp., with index.* $3.50.

Reviewed by PERRY MILLER

EUROPEAN observers have again and again reminded us that in Jonathan Edwards America produced its one great and original speculative genius, yet American historians, even when accepting this estimate, have shown a remarkable disposition to avoid discussion of his thought and to emphasize instead that in the long sweep of American development Edwards fought against the stars in their courses. The conventional juxtaposition of Edwards and Franklin generally redounds to the advantage of Franklin, and Edwards is written down, in the phrase of V. L. Parrington, as an "anachronism." No analysis has yet made it clear to modern readers wherein his philosophical greatness consisted, yet it is to Miss Winslow's everlasting credit that in this book she has not attempted that difficult task. She concentrates upon the biography, endeavoring no more than to indicate the chronology and general import of his ideas, acknowledging that their story would be a long and difficult one which very much needs the telling. She is writing upon Edwards "the man."

Many biographers whose heroes lived intensely in the mind or in the spirit have come to grief because they

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mistook the shadow of an external existence for the substance of a life, and no subject offers a more generous opportunity for such confusion than Edwards. Miss Winslow has admirably avoided the temptation by the simple expedient of remembering at every point that the traceable outline of his life provides at best a slender clue to understanding, that "the heart of his mystery yields to no inquiry which concerns line and color and a dated sequence of events." The result may be a little like "Hamlet" with Hamlet left out, yet there is an immense difference between the omissions of ignorance and the deliberate omissions of knowledge and humility. Miss Winslow's biography is admittedly only an approach to the great problem, but because it is informed throughout with an understanding of what the problem is, because it is based upon solid historical research not merely concerning Edwards but also concerning the setting and the background, because it is inspired with a genuine feeling for the Edwardsian temperament, it succeeds actually in throwing much light upon the problem.

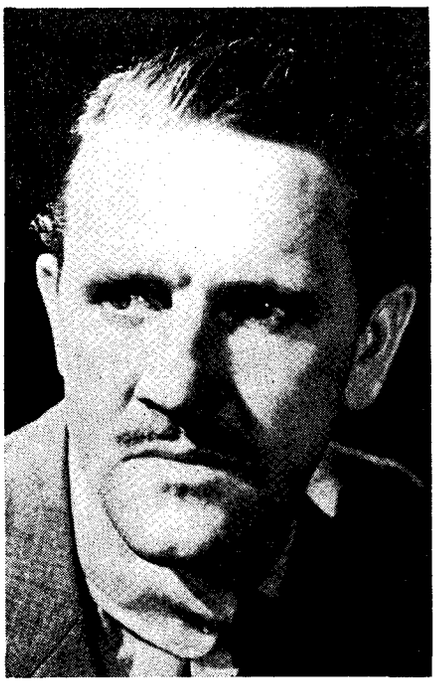
Indeed, the only score on which the reader might complain at all is that Miss Winslow has told her story with a little too much humility, that she has set Edwards in his period, in the Connecticut Valley, with a wealth of concrete detail, with a vivid and trustworthy recreation of the scene, and yet insists that these things do not count. In her eagerness to distinguish the spirit from the letter she asserts that Edwards himself has been more important than anything he ever did or said or wrote, that he is not to be "explained" in terms of the New England religious heritage, the local color of Northampton, or even of his theological system, and so she is led to lament once more that he chose "to speak through an outworn, dogmatic system instead of letting the new truth find more appropriate form of its own." Whether his thought could have found an "appropriate form of its own" unless Edwards had been bodily transported out of New England at an early age is, to say the least, a question, the same question that will always be raised by any effort to separate the content from the form, the impulse from the integument, of a creative artist. But if Miss Winslow raises the question, it is a way of calling attention to the fact that Edwards was an artist and a great one, even when speaking in the language of theology, for all his lack of mellowness and flexibility. For this reason her book becomes our best introduction to the study of Edwards.

Joads of the Covered Wagon

DON'T YOU CRY FOR ME. By John Weld. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1940. 494 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by CLYDE BRION DAVIS

IN the many novels written around the covered wagon migrations of the Overland Trail one formula has been followed pretty generally. That formula is to take a group of Class B motion picture characters and a Class B motion picture plot, borrow a little color from Francis Parkman and Washington Irving, and call the result an epic. If for no other reason than throwing this formula overboard, John Weld has distinguished himself in his first novel.



Joseph McElliot

John Weld's hero does not rescue the heroine.

On the credit side of Mr. Weld's literary ledger one may mark down the following items: He keeps a large number of characters moving in fairly logical sequence and almost all of these characters are plausible persons and distinct one from the other. His hero does not rescue the heroine from a single Indian raid or prairie fire or buffalo stampede. His migrants of 1846 are only slightly more noble than the Joads, if at all. After about the first seventy pages the narrative moves faster than any wagon train.

On the debit side: There are a glaring number of anachronisms. For instance, the argonauts sing "Sweet Alice, Ben Bolt," in the summer of 1846, whereas the song was written by T. D. English and Nathan Barker in 1850. They also sing about "My darling Clementine," which was written by Percy Montrose and published by Willis Woodward in 1885. A character refers to jail as the "hoosegow," which is army slang adapted from the Spanish *juzgado,* at the time American forces were civilizing the little brown brothers with a "Krag" in the Philippines. Many other expressions are used dating as late as the turn of the century. A buffalo hunt is described in thrilling detail and some of the hunters use Derringer pistols while all shoot the lumbering beasts in the head. No rifle in use in 1846 would have dented a buffalo's skull. The bison was exterminated by bullets placed just behind the left shoulder. The Derringer did not come into popular use until later than 1846 and would have been as effective against a buffalo as a BB gun. Mr. Weld refers to mesquite growing along the Trail in what now is Wyoming, Utah, and Nevada. Mesquite is a Mexican border plant which never grew that far north. He apparently has confused mesquite with bitter sage (*Artemisia tridentata*). Such inaccuracies do not give one confidence in the fine color the author has injected in his story.

On the other hand he has done a grand job describing the crossing of the Utah Salt Desert, and a grander job when the party is snowbound in the Sierras. In the latter instance he has followed the experiences of the ill-fated party of Jacob and George Donner down to minute details, drawing, apparently, from C. F. McGlashan's "A History of the Donner Party," and the diary of Patrick Breen. And this Donner affair, incidentally, is one of the most dramatic chapters in American history.

It would seem that Mr. Weld is open to criticism on this score, also. If he wished to write of the famous Donner case, why change the names of the actors?

Clyde Brion Davis is the author of several books, including "The Anointed," and "The Great American Novel."

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 313)

N. M. BUTLER

ACROSS THE BUSY YEARS

No man in my time has been so happy and on the whole so successful in public office as Theodore Roosevelt. . . . He took his official tasks very seriously, but he always took them and made certain that they did not take him.

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BERTRAND RUSSELL

NOW that the appointment of the distinguished thinker, Bertrand Russell, to teach in the City College of New York has been confirmed, and college and man must be attacked together, if attacked at all, it should be possible to set down calmly the points at issue.

Mr. Russell has been employed to teach the following subjects:

Philosophy 13: A study of modern conceptions of logic and of its relation to science, mathematics, and philosophy.

Philosophy 24B: A study of the problems in the foundation of mathematics.

Philosophy 27: The relations of pure to applied sciences and the reciprocal influence of metaphysics and scientific theories. The materials for analysis will be selected from the list of sciences treated philosophically.

No one, so far as we are aware, has disputed his competence in these subjects, and many, even among his enemies, have testified that in the fields outlined above he is perhaps the ablest scholar and teacher alive.

Nor has anyone, so far as we know, charged that the question of moral judgment, or of the practice of morals, enters into a course of mathematics, or even in logic, which is a method of thinking, not a content of thought. There can be no such thing as moral or immoral logic, there can only be good logic or bad. What logic can be used to demonstrate is not involved in these courses, which are essentially studies of the technique of thought.

No real issue, then, is involved in the work which Mr. Russell has been asked to do. This, in a way, is unfortunate, for if he had been asked to lecture on ethics, questions would have been raised which would have revealed the whole controversy in its true nature—a legitimate dispute as to whether education of youth of the collegiate grade should or should not be controlled by beliefs as to right and wrong popularly held, or professed by religious organizations large enough to constitute powerful pressure groups.

Such is not the ground of the present controversy, which can rather be defined as a desire to disqualify a mathematician, not for his mathematics, but because in an entirely different field he has expressed non-mathematical opinions objectionable to many. So stated, it would seem that we have here the emergence of an American parallel of the Nazi and Communist theory that chemistry, physics, or mathematics, must be German or Russian in order to be acceptable to the state. "Russian" biology has already repudiated theories and experiments in heredity which might be used to indicate that the purging of the middle class could have a deleterious effect on the intellectual efficiency of the Soviets. The authorities do not raise the question of whether it is true. They assert that it must not be true, and insist that only scientists indoctrinated with their ideology can be allowed to work in science. The Nazis and the Communists did not invent this idea—it was common in the Middle Ages—but few historians would doubt that the appearance of this particular ism in the United States in 1940 is the result of developments abroad. Nothing is so infectious as an idea, which spreads among enemies almost as fast as among friends, though in forms sometimes hard to diagnose.

What is the ethical heresy of which Mr. Russell can justly be accused? To choose isolated passages from his earlier speculative works, written in the years after the war when an extraordinary readjustment of codes, sexual and otherwise, was under way everywhere, is clearly unfair. No philosopher could, for example, have written of the sexual morality of the 1920's without taking notice of this readjustment and analyzing its possible results, both for good and ill. Whole books, not passages, must be produced in evidence, if his ideas are to be rightly presented. It is fair to take Mr. Russell's own statement as to his ethical philosophy in these matters. He has recently stated that he does not believe in promiscuity; that he does believe in what used to be named trial or companionate marriage, followed by what might be called a pre-divorce separation, if the trial is a failure.

It is to be noted at this point that the question of the rightness or wrongness of Mr. Russell's opinions as to trial marriage does not enter directly into this controversy at all. That it has been forced into it, is due quite as much to a popular misconception of the function of the university teacher, as to the isms of the clergy and others. The public insists upon identifying a teacher with a preacher. But it is not the business, and is seldom the practice, of a college teacher to impose a set of dogmas upon his class. He teaches a subject, and his first job is to analyze that subject into all its aspects. If the subject is a controversial one, he will not be entirely impartial—no human being is. If he is a biologist, he will be an evolutionist, but he will not fail to point out the defects and uncertainties in the various theories of how evolution works. If he uses his platform to preach a theory of his own without reference to the possible opposite, he is censurable, and rightly, by the college authorities as a propagandist instead of a teacher. If he lays strong emphasis, as he may, upon his own ideas as to what is the truth, he will quite certainly, if the subject is controversial, get violent reactions from his class. The powerful free trader, William Graham Sumner, turned out from his classes as bigotted a group of high tariff millionaires as the country has ever seen.

Even if Mr. Russell were to teach ethics, it is to be presumed that, in accord with his reputation, he would present both sides—which, in a democracy, is the only possible way to teach. No one expects a political platform to be fair-minded; but nothing can be so destructive of what we call the American system, as to carry over the dogmatism of a political or religious party into college education. No evidence has been adduced to indicate that this would have happened in the classrooms of Mr. Russell.

But he is not to teach ethics. The question thus emerges in its baldest form. Should a scientist of high competence, whose opinions as to the conduct of social relations differs from the beliefs of large numbers of his contemporaries, be allowed to teach subjects which have nothing whatsoever to do with social relations? Should a Democratic carpenter in a Republican community be allowed to build steps for the new Town Hall? Should a great Chinese philosopher who keeps concubines, according to the immemorial Chinese custom, in his Chinese home, be allowed to lecture in New York on Chinese Art? Should an Arab mathematician with a unique knowledge of his subject, who has three wives in Aleppo and believes in polygamy, be permitted to hold the chair of non-Euclidian geometry in the University of Michigan? Should Mr. Russell, who feels that some of the younger generation may have right on their side in their protests against late marriage so often leading to early divorce, and who suggests a possible remedy, be appointed to lecture an obviously mature audience on so different a subject as "the relations of pure to applied sciences"? H. S. C.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"Illegible" Poets

SIR:—A sentence in Mr. R. Ellis Roberts's "side-glance" at American literature in a recent issue of the *SRL* makes me want to argue. Speaking of the present neglect of Vachel Lindsay, Mr. Roberts writes, "Yet I still find him referred to with a shrugging if friendly ridicule by critics who will spend long hours discussing the illegibilities of Hart Crane or e. e. cummings."

Now, Lindsay certainly was not "illegible," and beyond question had brilliant talent: if Crane and Cummings are really illegible, critics who discuss them and disdain Lindsay are cuckoo. But who finds them illegible? Not Mr. Roberts alone, I am aware, but several writers plumping for conventional poetic writing.

I do not feel that I am equipped with any understanding or insight denied to these often eminent critics. But I do know the complete works of both Crane and Cummings, and can honestly declare that—except for a gnomic phrase here and an oblique metaphor there—I find nothing in them that is not meaningful and clear. This is not to deny that these poets have faults; but that any literate critic, conversant with English and French poetry, should find them "illegible" seems to me beyond belief.

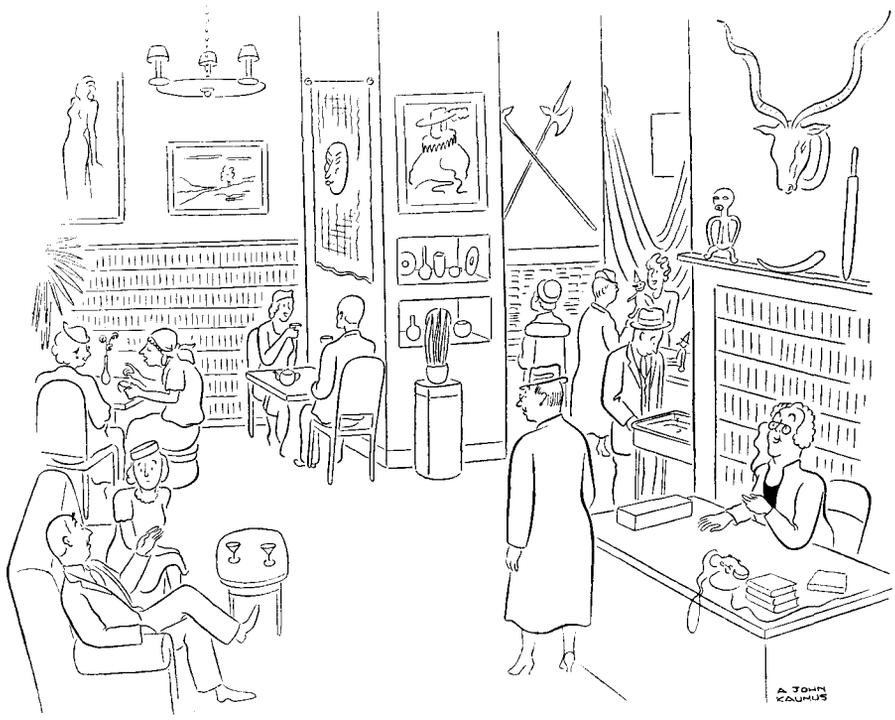
When Lindsay's easily approached surface meaning is once understood, his verses offer no food for speculation. The less easily approached meanings of such men as Wallace Stevens, Cummings, and—more particularly—Crane, once gotten at, offer rich material for "long hours of discussing."

HERBERT WEINSTOCK.
New York, N. Y.

Information, Please

SIR:—I am working on a history of the French newspaper press in California, and am finding many difficulties in getting information about the old time journals and their editors, even after consulting files of the papers where available and books dealing with California history. In many cases there are no files in existence, and there are serious gaps in others. If any of your readers can furnish me additional information, either about the papers themselves, or about the careers or personal characteristics and vicissitudes of their editors and proprietors, I should appreciate their getting in touch with me at the address here given. As far as I have been able to discover, no French newspapers were ever published in California except at San Francisco and Los Angeles.

CLIFFORD H. BISSELL
University of California,
Berkeley, California.



"This is the bookstore I've always dreamed of—lots of atmosphere!"

Brook Farm Again

SIR:—While readers of the *Saturday Review* are searching their files for material on the Northampton Community, might they also be on the alert for manuscripts relating to its fellow Utopian venture, Brook Farm? By permission of the Massachusetts Historical Society, I am editing for publication the original records of Brook Farm, and I shall include in the volume a considerable number of unpublished letters. Information about manuscripts as yet unknown to me is earnestly requested. I shall return promptly by registered mail any material sent to me.

ARTHUR E. BESTOR, JR.
Columbia University,
New York, N. Y.

"The Anatomy of Murder"

SIR:—Critics and audiences of "Leave Her to Heaven," the new John Van Druten murder affair in which Miss Ruth Chatterton is playing at the Longacre, if they find the play too harrowing have other recourse. They can curl up with "The Anatomy of Murder," by Helen Simpson and others (New York: Macmillan, 1937), and find out What Really Happened (a bow to Mrs. Belloc-Lowndes). Look for "The Rattenbury Case," pp. 215-302, by Francis Iles. Dedicated "to William Roughead, Esq., W.S., Maestro of Criminological Essayists"—the W.S. signifies Writer to the Signet—it describes with considerable vivacity the events leading up to the trial of Alma Victoria Rattenbury and George Percy Stoner for the murder of Francis Mawson Rattenbury. The book is more accessible than the volume in the Notable British Trials series, edited by Miss Tennyson Jesse, to which Mr. Van Druten makes his acknowledgments (and which, did he say, Shall Be Nameless?) and you get six other cases carefully considered by other members of the Detection Club than Mr. Iles. Or shall we say Anthony Berkeley, who is evidently the likeliest white hope in sight to fill the gap left by the passing of Edmund Pearson?

EARLE F. WALBRIDGE.

Baltimore Sea Captain

SIR:—I am gathering material for a work based on the life and career of Captain Thomas Boyle, sea captain and privateersman during the War of 1812. As co-author of a forthcoming book on privateers I am fairly well acquainted with his career during the war but it is with his early life that I am most concerned. Boyle was born in Marblehead, Mass., June 29, 1775 and went to sea a little over ten years later. He came to Baltimore, records indicate, in 1794, married here and made his home here. I am interested in his boyhood life and anything concerning his early life at sea. Anything any of your readers know about him will be appreciated and any records will be treated with great care.

WILLIAM B. CRANE.
Baltimore, Md.

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Bitter Sweet in London

THE TWO WIVES. By Frank Swinnerton. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1940. 367 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by R. ELLIS ROBERTS

THIS story opens on Sam Barnabas's fifty-fourth birthday. That popular actor is walking from Piccadilly down St. James's to Pall Mall, making the most of his sixty-five inches and the best of his fifty-four years in the brilliant summer sunshine which Mr. Swinnerton allows to bless London on his hero's birthday. In the first chapter Mr. Swinnerton sets his scene, chooses his cast, and gives us enough of the circumstances, tragic and happy, to let a skillful reader see that "The Two Wives" is going to be Swinnerton at the top of his form. That is "The Two Wives" is as good a novel as any living master of the character novel can write. The character novel is always popular and rarely receives enough critical praise. It is the kind of story in which the men and women, while lifelike, are invented: in which the author knows perfectly well every thought of theirs and can predict every action. It is the novel of Trollope, of Arnold Bennett, of H. G. Wells as opposed to the novel of Dostoievsky, of Marcel Proust, of Virginia Woolf: and those who practise it are commonly more concerned with the readers' enjoyment and with the conduct of the story than with style, method, or too curious an analysis of obscure motive. And it is impossible to be successfully pretentious in this kind of fiction: a dancer who fails in classical dancing is just a bad dancer, while a dancer who fails in the movement of an Isadora Duncan dance may get by as a mystic in dishevelled drapery.

Mr. Swinnerton is a minor master of the old-fashioned novel. He has the gift of invention, he has a rare talent for presenting character, and his effortless, capable style has ease and dignity. Nor is he afraid of violent action, though he never allows it more weight than it exercises in the lives of normal people. In this story we have divorce, suicide, murder, and treachery—and yet they do not touch more than the emotions of the characters. They do not distintegrate, because all the characters are in the true sense, common, normal people—except indeed the murderer. And it is only the unbalanced who are disintegrated by human sin, and only the saints who are inordinately distressed by it.

Drawing by Ettinger

Frank Swinnerton may have given us too much.

A possible, if rather ungenerous criticism of "The Two Wives" is that Mr. Swinnerton has given us too much. Sam Barnabas and his two wives, Sybil the egotist of pride, and Daphne the egotist of vanity, would have been enough for the story, without the study, powerful and sympathetic as it is, of the narrow, ineffective, frustrated Hugh Barnabas and his miserable wife. The effect of this abundance is, I admit, to emphasize the essential simple kindness and the stubborn shrewdness of Sam Barnabas: but the emphasis is almost too strong. He is left with scarcely a weakness, except slight attacks of professional pride when ignorant people dismiss his art because he succeeds splendidly in what he attempts instead of failing magnificently in an effort to do what they would have him do.

Still, here is a fine novel, in which observation and comment are most skillfully combined, in which humor is used as an ingredient not a side-dish, in which a rare and sympathetic intelligence is brought to play on ordinary men and women, the workers and the idlers of London, the decent, the shiftless, and the desperate. It is a world of normal, happy, healthy relationships, shaken for a time by the actions of miserable and wicked people, but not so shaken that the good and simple are unable, when the evil has passed, to reconstruct the natural pattern of their lives.

The Exiled Writer's Committee of the League of American Writers announce the award of literary fellowships of $100 each to Oskar Maria Graf, Will Schaber, and Bodo Uhse.

Puritan Passions

THE POWER AND THE GLORY. By Phyllis Bentley. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1940. 473 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by RICHARD ALDINGTON

THE theme of this novel is three generations of domesticity during the Civil War between King Charles and the Parliament. The story is told (and told well) as something like the memoirs of Penninah Thorpe (née Clarkson) from girlhood to old age.

The Clarksons and the Thorpes were Bradford w o o l merchants, Puritans and Roundheads. Penninah's cousins, the Ferrands, were landed g e n t r y, Church and King's men, Cavaliers. The puritan John Thorpe wants to marry Penninah, but as we have already guessed, her heart is given to the slightly deboshed cavalier cousin, Francis Ferrand. Penninah's parson brother, Will, is arrested for refusing to obey Archbishop Laud's mandates. As he is being haled off, Francis joins the mob who are pelting him. Whereupon, in a revulsion of feeling, Penninah spurns Francis and marries John. Francis in despair goes off to fight in the Low Countries.

By the time Penninah has had two children, the Civil War has come to Bradford. In the Royalist attack, Francis is wounded, and comes to Penninah's house for help. The puritan lady forgets her marriage vows, but is unfortunately caught *in flagrante* by the fanatical servant, Lister, who not only tells John, but in a subsequent skirmish kills Francis after he had surrendered.

John goes off sulkily with General Fairfax to fight for the Parliament, and the Thorpe house is sacked. Penninah fends for herself and the children in a spiritedly Scarlett O'Hara manner for four years, during which John neither writes nor sends her any money, which was tough on the children. Eventually they are reconciled, and John adopts Francis's child, Christopher, who grows up a replica of his father. Unable to fit into the puritan life of Bradford, Christopher goes off to Virginia and marries an heiress. But this separation from her love child breaks Penninah's heart and she never relishes life again.

The uniform narrative flows gently on the surface of things, keeping to the news-in-every-paragraph system. The author is generous with births, marriages, deaths, and the care of children. There is nothing in the book to offend anyone, to cause indignation or surprise, and it ends on what is referred to as a Note of Hope.

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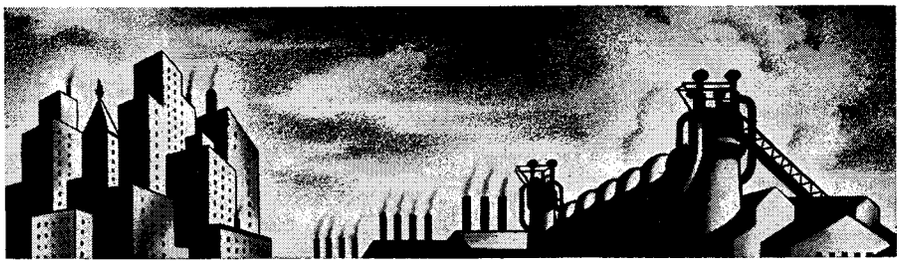
Realistic Fiction and Meyer Levin

CITIZENS. By Meyer Levin. New York: The Viking Press. 1940. 650 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by JAMES T. FARRELL



From the jacket of "Citizens."

MEYER LEVIN was present in Chicago on Memorial Day, 1937, when the Chicago police force prevented striking steel workers from establishing a peaceful picket line before a steel plant. On that day, ten workers were killed by the police —seven of them shot in the back; many others, including women and children, were wounded or clubbed. The La Follette Committee on Civil Liberties investigated this affair, and the story of it is told in Part 14 of the record of that committee.

In estimating "Citizens," we cannot test it by a comparison of the facts of the book and those which actually occurred. "Citizens" constructs a series of events parallel to real historic ones, but it also adds imagined characters, and imagined events. It is not social history but realistic fiction. We must remember this, or we will confuse our criteria of judgment.

In style and method, Mr. Levin seems to me to be derivative from both John Dos Passos and Sinclair Lewis. For instance, he breaks the course of his general narrative in order to interlard a series of biographies which detail the lives of those workers who have been shot down by the police. These fictional biographies are reminiscent of Dos Passos in manner, in the use of vernacular, and in their organization of details. They lack, however, Dos Passos's narrative skill. In his general narrative, Mr. Levin writes in a manner similar to Sinclair Lewis, except that he lacks Lewis's pungency when Lewis is at his best.

Mr. Levin sees details with a reportorial eye: he seems to have that spectator's view of characters and events which is characteristic of the reporter. His style is that of a competent journalist. At times, however, one feels as if one were reading the warmed-over headlines of yesterday's "extra," rather than the vivid recreation of characters and events which one expects to find in the pages of an admittedly realistic novel.

The narrative is unified through the character of Dr. Mitch Wilner, whom we met in Levin's previous novel, "The Old Bunch." Due to the urging of his wife, Mitch goes to strike headquarters on the day of the massacre and he witnesses what happens. He becomes involved in the strike professionally, emotionally, and intellectually. He tries to give aid to the wounded, but is prevented from doing so by the police. He becomes the doctor of many of the injured. He is revolted by the brutality he has witnessed, and he signs a protest, joins a citizens' committee, speaks at a large protest meeting, appears as an important witness before the senatorial hearings in Washington, and interestedly follows the course of events following the massacre. Also, what he has seen and heard leaves questions in his mind. He wants to find out the determining factor in all the sequence of events which lead to the slaughter. He wants to place his finger accurately on the culpable. Further, he is drawn from his medical practice and his experiments into the wider world of politics and labor struggles. He seeks to find answers to social problems. In a sense, the book tends to become an account of the doctor's search for the key to the class struggle. It must be admitted that in his long quest, the doctor did not learn much. He has many discussions. In these, he is usually given the Popular Front in one way or another. His contribution to such discussions consists of apologies drawn from medicine. In other words, he seeks to learn about the class struggle by trying to explain the conduct of policemen through the medium of expositions of allergy and anaphylaxis, with a little passing reference to the hormones. I must confess that this is all excitedly dull; it does not aid in characterization; and it throws no light on the events of the book.

"Citizens" is not a novel of character, for the author does not create any vivid and rounded characters. His eye for detail is reportorial. His treatment of politics is vague, and disorientated. He speaks of having written this kind of a book in order to lessen the chance of reaching false conclusions, but he reaches no conclusions of any consequence. It is pretty much a book of dull discussions.

Your Literary I.Q. No. 10

10 STAGE SETTINGS

From the brief descriptions given below of the stage settings of the opening scenes, can you recognize these ten well-known plays? Allow 5 points for each correct title, and another 5 if you can also name the authors. A score of 70 is par, 80 is good, 90 or better is excellent. Answers are on page 19.

1. The cocktail lounge of the Hotel Monte Gabriele.
2. An East River wharf.
3. The Black Mesa Filling Station and Bar-B-Q lunch room.
4. March, 1918. An officers' dugout in the trenches before St. Quentin.
5. Gashwiler's general store in Simsbury, Illinois.
6. The courtyard of the palace in Titipu.
7. A bare stage with no scenery and no curtain.
8. The press room of the Criminal Courts building in Chicago.
9. A summer resort hotel on a mountain top in mid-winter.
10. A semi-public living room back of the general store and hotel in Pago Pago.

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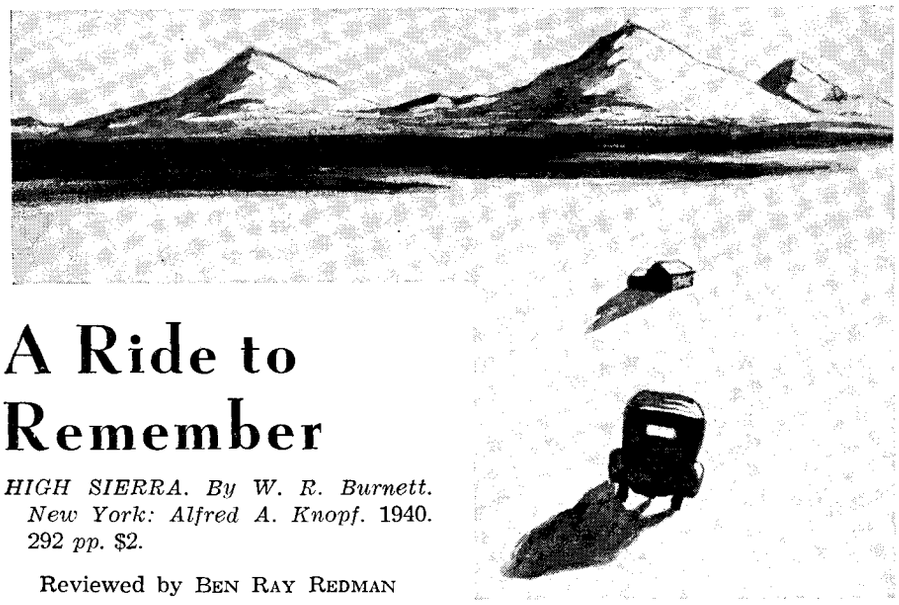

From the jacket of "High Sierra."

A Ride to Remember

HIGH SIERRA. By W. R. Burnett. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1940. 292 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

READING this story of Roy Earle, fictitious last survivor of the notorious Dillinger mob, I was reminded of one of those amusing novels in miniature by the late Sir Walter Raleigh. Once, wrote Sir Walter, there was a tiger in the jungles of Bengal, but when he thought of himself he did not think of a tiger —he thought of a kitten. Pretty soon, as I remember it, a native postman came along. The tiger ate the native postman. Later, Mr. Browning came by, singing, "God's in his heaven, all's right with the world." Then the tiger ate Mr. Browning. And that's the novel.

It was Roy himself who brought the tiger to mind. During the last phase of his career Roy was named Public Enemy No. 1, and headlined as Mad Dog Roy Earle, but when he thought of himself he did not think of a public enemy or of a mad dog — he thought of a small boy on an Indiana farm, a kid who played baseball and splashed in the swimming-hole, who was greedy for Aunt Minnie's ice cream and chocolate cookies, who swung on a gate with a yellow-haired girl named Roma Stover.

Roy's simplified past was realer to him than the present. When he talked in his sleep it was the small boy who spoke: " 'Oh, yeah? I can lick two like you, Fat Evans. You give me that ball bat. It's my turn. It is so. Ain't it, Elmer?' " This was puzzling to the woman who loved him and lay beside him. " 'There he goes again,' said Marie. 'Even when he's asleep he's thinking about when he was a kid. That's sure funny.' "

Marie held the key to his character —although she was no more able to use it than he was himself—but the world at large, that had no key, knew him only as a hard-faced, well-muscled, merciless bank robber; and Roy's own world respected him, unquestioningly, as a guy who could somehow throw the fear of god into other guys who were supposed to be tough, as one of the most reliable rodmen in the business, as an artist with a chopper. That's why Big Mac had gone to the trouble and expense of springing him when he was doing the book; that's why Roy found himself heading for California, a pardoned lifer at thirty-seven. It had cost dough to spring him, and Mac was no philanthropist. But if Mac was going to have the Inn at Tropico Springs knocked over he'd need a big-timer to keep his punks in line. And Roy was it. He'd be working with a couple of jitterbugs and a Mexican night clerk, but the Tropico was a soft touch. It was the swellest joint on the West Coast, and during the season its safety-deposit boxes were lousy with cash and glass. (If for Tropico Springs you read Palm Springs, you won't be far wrong.)

The connoisseur of underworld fiction will find himself at home in "High Sierra," surrounded by familiar figures and imaginatively involved in familiar criminal activities, with a certain zest added by a mountain setting in which tommy-guns and crooks' habits of thought and speech are as incongruous as a silk topper would be in the middle of Pyramid Lake. He will be held by a skillfully written yarn that builds tensely to an explosive climax and then gathers pace in a man-hunt finish. But "High Sierra" is something more and better than just a slick, hard-boiled job. Beneath the surface of the oft-told tale there lies the character of Roy—penetrated, understood, and revealed by the novelist. The portrait that Mr. Burnett has painted is both effective and affecting, and it is, unfortunately, a significant portrait in the contemporary gallery of typical Americans. In his description of violent physical action Mr. Burnett's dramatic sense stops him short of melodrama; in his delineation of character his sympathy stops short of sentimentality. You can go along with "High Sierra" just for the ride, fast and exciting, but it will leave you something to remember.

American Arden

UNDER THE REDWOOD TREES. By George Digby. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1940. 285 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by JAMES GRAY

MR. DIGBY has made just one very small mistake in his engaging book. He should have called it "Under the Redwood Tree," using the singular of the noun in order to paraphrase the line from Shakespeare's song, "Under the Greenwood Tree." For Mr. Digby was in a lyric mood when he found his own Forest of Arden in the course of a transcontinental tour of America. Everything that happened to him after he and his wife discovered their "dream house" in California was soothing, appealing, or hilarious. The touch of nature that makes the whole world kin was upon each experience: in the befriending of a lively child of the depression, who remembered her manners even when her eyes betrayed a starving condition; in the melodramatic episode involving "wanted" men; even in the strange encounter with a civet cat. George Digby, who knows so well how to make readable and repeatable anecdotes out of any adventure great or small, has never done better than the pages of this book.

Two previous volumes of rambling autobiography have made his name well known. In "Goose Feathers" and "Down Wind" he captured and held an audience. His following will be glad to know that this wandering Englishman has now brought the story of his unusually pleasant life down to date.

There is no pretension to this book of comment. Of everything about which the rest of us chat at the dinner table, he makes readable, minor literature. He has sensible, unpatronizing things to say about Roosevelt, CCC camps, the manners of American children, morticians and their trade, the plight of the under-privileged, and the hope of liberty. It is a highly personal book, full of c a s u a l, intimate good-will. Among "conversation pieces" it deserves a conspicuous place.

James Gray is the author of "Wings of Great Desire" and "Wake and Remember." He is the literary editor of the St. Paul Dispatch.

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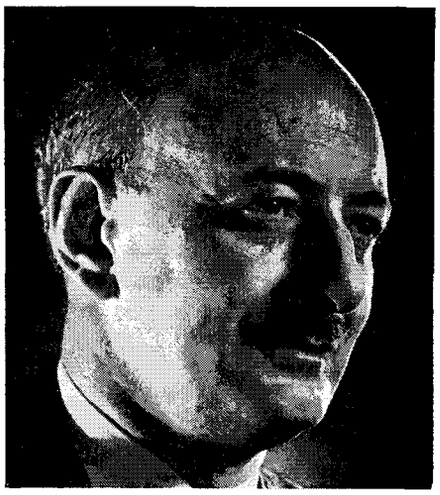
Escape and Acceptance

BY LOUIS UNTERMEYER

RECENT events have intensified the dichotomy of the creative mind: the double desire to share and avoid the agonies of our times; to participate in the politico-sociological struggles and to reject them for what small inner security may still persist; to accept a disordered world and escape it by any chance, trick, or desperate device. With a few notable exceptions, the poets have tried both extremes. They have attempted the heights of impassioned public speech, and they have sounded the depths of allegories so private and symbols so esoteric that they cease to communicate.

In the escape achieved through fantasy, the reckless image, and the eruptive power of words as words, rather than through the progressive logic of ideas, no recent poet has exercised a greater influence than Hart Crane. In "Poems from the Greenberg Mss."* James Laughlin, who is responsible for the publication of the best experimental writing and the most provocative *avant-garde* culture in America, reveals one of Crane's sources. Rumors had circulated for some time concerning Crane's use (without credit) of Greenberg's dazzling lines; Philip Horton, Crane's biographer, had suggested the word-drunken quality of Greenberg's inchoate visions; but no portion of Greenberg's semi-mythical work had ever appeared. The history of the fabulous manuscripts begins, as Laughlin says, like a mystery story. Samuel Greenberg, son of impoverished and consumptive parents had died, after spending much of his life in hospitals, before he was twenty. This was in 1917 or 1918. Six years later Hart Crane, wintering in Woodstock, New York, became intimate with William Fisher, who had acquired several of Greenberg's notebooks. Crane heard the curiously uneven rhapsodies, took possession of the manuscripts, typed out several — Crane's "Emblems of Conduct" is a mosaic of five Greenberg poems — and wrote excitedly about his discovery to Gorham Munson: "This poet was a Rimbaud in embryo. . . . No grammar, no spelling, and scarcely any form, but a quality that is unspeakably eerie and the most convincing gusto."



Edward Ames Richards

Sydney King Russell

Reuel Denney

Gusto is the hallmark of Greenberg's loose and almost illiterate writings. Long before surrealism became a movement, Greenberg was hypnotizing himself with words in orgies of supersensibility. He did not live long enough to exploit, or even to explore, the borderlands of the subconscious, but he seemed to dwell in a state between incoherence and eloquence, between sheer hallucination and pure vision. Greenberg was desperately ill, often feverish, and probably mad. But there were a few times —as Laughlin shows in his valuable notes — when Greenberg benefited from his disbalance, when his madness made "divinest sense" and achieved a kind of clairvoyance beyond the disciplined intelligence.

Plowden's Kernan's* is a more reasoned (and reliable) form of escape. Kernan takes the traditional Grand Tour of poetry, getting Away from it All via witches at crossroads, Delphic dancers, hawthorne-time in Ireland (it's not so far from lilacs), peacocks at the pool, the Lady of the Dew, and languid impressions after hearing Debussy. Every tradition is pursued and prettified; every dead cliché is lovingly embalmed. Time is "ruthless," the fragrant earth is "mystically still," in May it is "glorious to be alive," Yeats is "a mystic Gael" who sings a "lilting endless song," Keats is a "slim dark-haired" boy whose words are "wed to Fancy and wrapped secure in Beauty's timeless hold." Here, in this perfect never-never-land, the actual world is excluded more determinedly than ever.

Mr. Richards and Mr. Russell have made excellent compromises. "Time Strikes"† (Mr. Richards's first volume) and "Proud Universe"§ (Mr. Russell's sixth) analyze the modern world from which they make sporadic excursions only to face it again. Mr. Richards excels in the not too severe-

(*Continued on page* 18)

POEMS FROM THE GREENBERG MSS. Edited by James Laughlin. Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions. 1939. 30 pp. 50 cents.

HAWTHORN TIME IN IRELAND. By Plowden Kernan. Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press. 1939. 81 pp. $1.50.

†*TIME STRIKES. By Edward Ames Richards. New York: Columbia University Press. 1939. 109 pp. $1.25.*

§*PROUD UNIVERSE. By Sydney King Russell. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1940. 112 pp. $2.00.*

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BOOK PREVIEW

Where Authors Become Writers

How Actors Are Broken and Writers Made

BY GEORGE ARLISS

"I should like to give a dinner for the writers, but would they come?"

ONE who writes a novel is called an author, just as one who writes a play is spoken of as the author of that play. But when the same author is engaged by Hollywood to write for the films, he or she becomes a "writer." I have never heard anyone who writes for the films called an "author." He who is going through the stage of development from author to writer cannot be said to be gaining glory or inspiration—not at all like the chrysalis that develops beautiful wings; quite the contrary; he used his wings to fly to Hollywood; let him be satisfied. No writer is allowed to have wings.

The difference between an author and a writer is by no means a subtle one. While you are an author you are writing the thing that emanates from your own brain; you are free to follow the dictates of your own imagination. But when you are turned into a writer you have to do as you're told, and—as the Americans say—"and like it." That is why so many authors of distinction have failed dismally in Hollywood. If you have been used to freedom you can't accept imprisonment—and like it.

At the same time, it is a mistake to think that Hollywood is altogether to blame. The author of a good play can be unbelievably stupid in his attempts to prepare his work for the movies. It is surprising how unintelligent a great artist can be when he ventures outside his own medium. My experience of the novelist has been that however dramatic his stories may be, he has little or no sense of the theater. If I were compelled to give an opinion, which I am not, I should say that the mistake Hollywood makes is in ever engaging a literary giant at all; I should say that it is cheaper for Hollywood to allow him to continue to be an author and then to enter the competitive field and buy his published work.

Those writers who have grown up in the studios frequently find me irritating; what they see as effective scenes I am likely to regard as interruptions. I am intolerant of any scene that does not bear directly on the story. There are many, apart from the writers, who disagree with me and who believe that the movies should be divorced or at any rate separated from the theater as far as possible: that in spite of movies having become talkies it is still more important to satisfy the eye than the ear.

I always spend several weeks on the manuscript before beginning rehearsals of any picture, in an effort to make it more like a play and less like a picture. This will explain at once why I am not popular with writers, either in London or in Hollywood. I spend too much time interfering in other people's business. But I contend that writers, and even authors, should be very patient and forbearing with the actor who has to carry the play or story on his shoulders. (Chorus: "We are.") It is one thing to write words and quite another thing to speak them.

I try to convince writers that I do not alter their manuscripts necessarily because I think my changes are better, but because I think they are better for me; and if they are better for me, they are likely to be better for the picture. (Cries of "Oh! Oh!") The star on the stage or screen becomes the responsible person in the mind of the audience, just as soon as he walks on. Under all conditions he has to bear the blame. If he is really bad in the part, the audience knows it and registers accordingly. If it is a bad story, the audience says, "He ought to have known better than to appear in a thing like this." If it's a half-bad story, they say, "He's not as good in this as he was in the last thing we saw him play." If the language is stilted and unreal, they say, "He doesn't seem easy somehow; not like himself at all."

An actor may not have constructive ability but his contact with audiences is likely to make him a good judge of how a situation should be led up to, and how a point can be most effectively phrased in order to "put it over." Most actors who have become popular favorites have obvious limitations. The man who can do everything well lacks, as a rule, what is called personality—the something that makes the audience like him, remember him, recognize him when they see him again, and eventually take him to their bosom. It is precisely because of his limitations that the opinion of the actor, who has made an intensive study of a part, should be listened to by writers and directors with great respect. (Voice: I suppose you mean "Patience.") Sometimes the actor will be wrong. He may have failed to catch the author's idea, and his suggestions may prove destructive. (Chorus: "Hear, Hear!") But in such cases it is seldom that he is not open to correction.

Although I do not attempt to disguise the fact that I am on the side of the actor, I am also in full sympathy with the writer. I do not blame a writer for regarding me with anger and contempt, or for eventually chucking up the job in despair. But he has never been an actor. He doesn't understand that when one faces an audience, it is necessary not merely to repeat the author's lines, but to believe in them. Therefore if the man that the actor has to portray suddenly speaks or behaves in a way that is unbelievable in the character already established, the actor, who is responsible for the portrayal of that character, must in self-defense make some protest.

Sometimes we see an actor on the screen play a scene in a temperament that is entirely out of key with what we suppose his state of mind would be, judging by what has just previ-

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ously passed. This is not always the fault of the actor; it is sometimes due to the fact that changes have been made in the script at the last moment, or that the story was not actually completed when the shooting began. The actor becomes confused as to what is really expected of him, and the writers have frequently got themselves so entangled that they are more than a trifle uncertain of what they mean themselves.

Frankly, it is impossible to find a sufficient number of good stories. Any star will admit that he often has to accept something second-rate because it has not been possible to find anything within the required time that he considers really worth doing. The producer can only do his best with what he can get. Stories have to be written; even if they grew on trees, I doubt whether the plantation could have matured as quickly as the crop of movie-houses has grown.

The difficulty is that the desire for pictures as entertainment has grown too rapidly. It has taken the place of many of the home occupations that once used to engage the rising generations. I do not know how many families today gather round their mother's knee to hear Charles Dickens read aloud; not many, I think. Wool mats are no longer made, and I know very few girls who are learning to play the piano. But in a year there are hundreds of millions of admissions paid to the British and American cinemas alone. I do not offer any opinion as to whether this change is good or bad for the youth of today, but it is one of the factors that has necessitated the output of more pictures than it is possible to produce without sometimes descending to a lower level than is desirable.

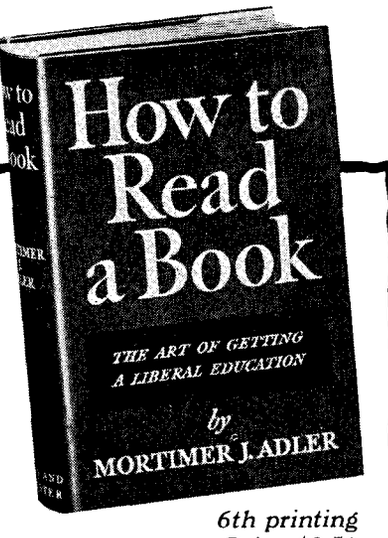
After I had finished "The Guv'nor" there was a long spell of nerve-racking uncertainty and disappointment as to what picture I would make next. None of the proposed stories turned out to be satisfactory, but they nearly all seemed sufficiently promising to warrant their being worked over in the hope of getting them right. I worked about as hard as I ever want to work—a great many more hours a day than when I have had something to show for it. New writers with fresh ideas were called in with no satisfactory result. It seemed impossible that with all the resources of Gaumont-British I should remain idle for lack of a story. Then I had an idea—Cagliostro.

The Powers-that-Be were enthusiastic and Michael Balcon set a couple of very able writers to work on it. The writers were jubilant; it seemed easy. There was drama enough in his life to make half-a-dozen pictures, in fact a writer with imagination might almost be satisfied with what he finds in the "Encyclopaedia Britannica." That is what I thought when I was first bitten with the idea. But all the marvelous hair-raising things he did in real life, miracles that gained for him the confidence of kings and princes, seem to become just childish pranks when transferred to the stage; and much to my disappointment they were no more convincing when designed for the screen. Five or six weeks of hard labor were put into this effort. By that time everybody's confidence was shaken—everybody's but the writers, who very naturally believed that their version would have been all right if I hadn't monkeyed with it.

Then somebody, I expect it was Michael Balcon, got the bright idea that I should do a detective story. This did not appeal to me very strongly; not that I was averse to playing a detective, but because that sort of picture seemed to be a specialty of Hollywood, both in direction and in acting. It is the thing that is likely to be done much better in America than in England. But amongst Edgar Wallace's innumerable characters is "Mr. Reeder," a different kind of detective and very English. Mr. Reeder was brought forth, and looked promising. Brian Wallace, son of Edgar Wallace, was on the writing staff of Gaumont-British and it was probably he who made the suggestion. Mr. Reeder is a type that should be the character actor's delight. He is quite unlike the average stage detective, and shows every sign of being a great favorite with the audience. So I agreed to do Mr. Reeder, and the most likely writers, including Brian Wallace, were assigned to the job. And for a considerable time they all worked furiously on it. Their script was submitted to me and I worked furiously on it. Then we had a conference and it was decided that we had all been working too furiously and that a few calm collected writers had better be called in and allowed to work without interruption for about five or six weeks.

After about a month I was called to London for conferences. The new "Mr. Reeder" was submitted to me, and I didn't like it. Further time was spent on it and eventually I came to the conclusion that this kind of detective story is not the kind of thing I can do. The unanimous opinion of the writers was that it was all my fault; I refused to be satisfied with anything they offered. But I was obstinate—I do not admit that in this instance my judgment was at fault. The fact that the story turned out to be exactly right for one type of

(*Continued on page* 19)



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Pleasant Excursion; Likable Guide

END OF THE RIVER. By Desmond Holdridge. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1940. 317 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by OLIVER LA FARGE

I AM not quite sure how to take Mr. Holdridge's novel, though there can be no doubt of his narrative and descriptive skill. Is his main character, the Indian Manoel de Deus, primarily intended to be a symbol of bewildered man? Or is the first purpose of the book to give a real analysis of the mind of a thoroughly primitive Indian and a picture of the personality of a Brazilian river? Or is it just possible that the author himself is not sure?

As a study of the mind of a primitive man, I question the book's validity. It seems to me that I have seen often before this confusion of naiveté with a failure to reason and respond to stimuli which is almost subhuman. I don't think primitive men, certainly not Indians, are like that.

As an allegory of bewildered man torn between democracy (principal men) and totalitarianism (chiefs), the situation presented is one-sided and rather too special to carry into universality. In fact, one feels that the social allegory was added as a secondary prop to the story.

But then again, it may not be necessary to take "End of the River" in any special way at all, in which case one can simply settle down to a very good time. Little Son, a half-grown Arekuna from the headwaters, who has never seen a white man, is projected downriver by forces beyond his control. By a series of stages he experiences all the different, progressively more complex and more nearly civilized, aspects of river life until he has become a uniformed fascist in the city of Pará near the mouth. The story has the pattern and feel of a great river, twisting, varying, growing deeper and broader. The final tragedy, at the eleventh hour and fifty-ninth second before everything would have become all right, seems rather manufactured for the sake of a tight ending, but even so it has emotional force.

The descriptions of scenery and activity are brilliant. Whatever difficulty he may have in realizing characters, Mr. Holdridge has a genius for conveying the feel of places and of groups and kinds of men. The first, shabby, bored little town, the slavery and horror of the rubber camp, the epic voyage upriver in the big canoes—epic to the reader, routine to most of the participants—remain effectively, movingly vivid in the reader's mind. Yet the vividness is achieved without fireworks. It is simply good writing. To this must be added a fine faculty for inventing incident; something is always happening, usually something interesting, unexpected, and entirely credible.

Entertainment value, then, is high. I suspect that the author aimed at something more "important," there is a near-achievement of what we vaguely term significance, which fails because of the haziness I first mentioned. After reading and digesting "End of the River" one is left with the impression of a delightful Brazilian excursion, and the feeling that if the author can add real penetration of character to his other gifts he will do something magnificent.

Oliver La Farge is the author of the Pulitzer Prize winning novel of Indian life, "Laughing Boy."

Conscious Flirt

MADAME RÉCAMIER. The Biography of a Flirt. By Henry Dwight Sedgwick. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1940. 326 *pp., with index.* $3.

Reviewed by ALEXANDER COWIE

THE beauty of Madame Récamier had no element of strangeness: it impressed all beholders in the same fashion—like the simple beauty of a flower or of a young child. Yet like a flower it was essentially unattainable. To each suitor she granted the misleading favor of her smile and her sympathy; more she could not offer because of her inherent "virginal disposition." Disappointed suitors—representing much of the wit, valor, and devotion of France for a quarter-century—reacted differently. Some shed tears, but wiped them soon; some grumbled at "wasted time;" some remained hopeless, happy slaves for life. All wrote facile, sentimental notes. All chanted praises—a little monotonously, it must be confessed—of her extreme "goodness" (*bonté*). Even women had little to say against her. There is an odd lack of passion and tragedy in the record, very little that is sordid. Madame Récamier's beauty was not a fatal beauty calculated to launch men on desperate projects. When Napoleon, who had heard of her fame, failed to secure her as a woman-in-waiting, his reaction was no more heroic than to deny financial credit to her husband's bank. Everywhere men sighed for her, and she became (in Madame de Staël's phrase) the "heroine of all sentiments."

But there was, and is, a mystery about the facts of her life. It is commonly agreed that her marriage at fifteen to a man twenty-seven years her senior was a genteel farce, legalized but not consummated. Darker problems elude definite solution. Had M. Récamier been the lover of his wife's mother? Quite probably, thinks Mr. Sedgwick, author of the present biography. Was he also—what more than one person whispered—the father of his bride? Probably not, thinks the biographer. But these matters, though frankly faced, are not Mr. Sedgwick's real quarry. Rather he has aimed to present a kaleidoscopic view of the external life of Madame Récamier: her wooers, her salons, her little journeyings, her exile (forty leagues from Paris!), her association with de Staël, her engagement with Prince Augustus of Prussia, her long sentimental friendship with Chateaubriand. From time to time the author inserts historical slides intended to keep the reader up to date on the rapidly moving events of French history from 1789 to 1848. But mainly he hovers over the enchanting figure, and imperishable, porcelain beauty of Madame Récamier. He openly ranks himself as one of her admirers, ready to condone her coquettish habit, convinced of her essential *bonté*. To him, as to many another, she was the "embodiment of the most gracious qualities" to be found in woman. It may be questioned whether a woman capable of playing with the affections of a young man in order to offset losses suffered in other quarters is really to be described as gracious. One remembers, too, the candid observation of the daughter of Mme de Staël: "Madame Récamier is good and pretty, but a life of little flirtations does not elevate the soul." Yet perhaps it is idle to examine the conscience of a person who was mainly decorative—like a cat or a vase.

Mr. Sedgwick's book is fairly substantial but unpretentious and, compared with Herriot's, brief. It is neither so journalistic as is suggested by its raucous subtitle nor so scholarly as the presence of bibliography and index would suggest. Scholars will challenge the author's research methods at a few points, and they will wish that the book had been proofread more carefully. But Mr. Sedgwick has not tried to write a challenging book. He does not huff and puff in an effort to demolish earlier theories; he simply tries to recapture the bouquet of a period and the charm of a woman. In this he has been successful; he has written a pleasant, though perhaps not important, book.

Alexander Cowie is a member of the Department of English at Wesleyan University.

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PROSE AND POLITICS

(*Continued from page 4*)

only one in the list of the six writers about whom this fairly may be said.

Wallace writes in a sort of polished corn-tassel style which offers the most daring propositions in the most unaccented prose. He is a man of wide reading, referring now to Max Weber's conclusions about the Protestant influence on the growth of capitalism, now to George William Russell's findings on the subservience of democracy to capitalism, now to Flanders Petrie's comments on the decline of Rome. Within one page he can applaud observations by Pius XI and Karl Marx. He believes that capitalism and democracy are in reconcilable conflict, with religion the catalyst over which they can fuse. Fusion or not, "capitalism is on trial for its life," and the corporations, "the holy of holies" of the capitalistic economic system, must learn to coöperate with the government if their system is to avoid "hardening of the arteries." Wallace, unlike Tugwell and the pure New Dealers, threatens capitalism not with the prospect of government domination but with reminders of past calamity. He believes in the preservation of capitalism, and he contends that government should supervise its economy in order to cure its ills rather than to curb its excesses.

Corporations in the United States [Mr. Wallace writes in his book "Paths to Plenty," in drawing the capitalists' attention to pertinent history] have been given a legal standing which puts them in a position to dominate most of our economic life in the same way as a few great land-owning families dominated Great Britain until 1830. A few thousand families in the United States today have an extraordinary power based on the corporate form or organization. On the whole they have meant well, but unfortunately they have shown less capacity to think and act continuously in behalf of the general welfare than the one thousand land-holding families which ran England for so many years.

Since a good deal of the farmer's problem is a problem in world economics, Wallace favors a vigorous American internationalism. Here, as well as on the moral issue, he stands apart from intense New Dealers. Their most pronounced isolationist is Jerome Frank, the only emotionalist among the six authors. "A depression in America is a mental, not an economic, phenomenon," he wrote in "Save America First." This unaccountable wistfulness sets Frank himself apart from the men who consider that the physical maladjustments of the nation are real. He entered the New Deal in 1933 as counsel for the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. There his meditative exercises threw him into cross purposes with Henry Wallace and Wallace's chief associate of the day, Chester Davis. They considered him a stratosphere thinker, far from reality, and he was "purged." Now he is head of the Securities and Exchange Commission. Since the issue in Washington became the war, he has lost the high influence which he enjoyed with the White House and Secretary Ickes after Wallace dismissed him. His plight as a thinker without an important following is the plight of all New Dealers, whom the New Deal of 1940 puzzles. Today the President has conservative tinges, in the sense that he is willing to stand on what has been done.

In his message to Congress in January Mr. Roosevelt put aside home reform for world salvation. For the author of "Save America First" it was a message unrelated to his own and his fellow New Dealers'. Two years ago Frank asked: How shall America be sound and prosperous? His book answers: above all she should go her own way. Europe is disintegrating and faces calamity. We can only undermine our own economy by indulging ourselves in large scale economic relations with Europe. Let us concentrate on our domestic problems and make our economy work within our own boundaries.

The only New Deal author of major magnitude who has moved with the President into this new field is Adolf Berle.

Holy, holy, holy,
Tugwell, Berle, Moley

went the ribald hymn sung in Washington in 1933, when Berle ("Liquid Claims and National Wealth") was at the R. F. C., helping the planning of the redemption of the United States. It was thought then that these men made up the trinity of large minds who ran the government. In "After Seven Years" Ray Moley, who fought with the other angels and left the Administration, disclosed that really it was he who was the government all by himself. Now Berle is in his seat.

Yet however far overseas the President's interests have wandered, the new dealish ideas which the New Deal translated into action for almost six years are the fundamentals of American political practice, as different from the practice of 1932 as the American system differed in 1790 from the British. In the years after Lincoln's assassination, when the Republican Party of the industrial revolution formed the later Republic, the man of affairs, the manufacturer, the gentleman of finance, shaped our governmental ends. A major element in the Roosevelt revolution was the revolutionary dismissal of the man of affairs as principal counsellor to the government. In his place Roosevelt chose the writer.

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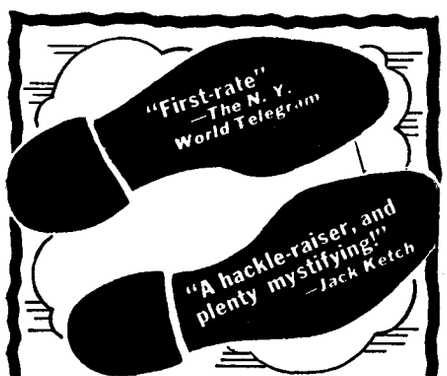

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PUTNAM'S

ESCAPE AND ACCEPTANCE

(*Continued from page* 13)

ly intellectual, in the split between experience and impulse. Because of a realization of this creative conflict, the poems in the first person are his best. When he has freed himself from a manifest indebtedness to Frost, Mr. Richards will (probably) disclose a voice altogether his own. Mr. Russell is most skillful in the sonnet, but, too often, it is only skill which survives. The form triumphs and the author loses; all that remains to comfort the poet is a sonorous anonymity. When Mr. Russell trusts himself to the more tenuous lyric he is less "important" but more persuasive. Anthologists should be interested in the neat disposals of ironic situations, in the etched portraits, and what used to be called vignettes.

John Ciardi declares his allegiance to the contemporary scene with engaging eagerness in "Homeward to America."* This is youth speaking—Ciardi is twenty-five, winner of the Hopwood Prize for Poetry in 1939—speaking with candor if not with confidence. Since the author is not only young but honestly observant, his is not an untroubled poetry; the nightmare of imminent and universal death hangs over such poems as "Reply to S. K.," the mordant "Spring Song," and the tender-tragic "Letters for the Next Time." In the epistolary vein, the most immediately touching is the "Letter for Those Who Grew Up Together." That its nostalgia is softened by resignation does not prevent it from being the best poem in the book.

There is nothing resigned in Reuel Denney's "The Connecticut River."* This, too, is a first volume, alternately tough and sensitive, but rebellion smoulders in its pages. There is an unexpected elasticity and vigor here—a kind of supple solidity—whether the author is writing at some remove, as in "The Burial of De Soto," or mixing the concrete event with abstract ideas, as in "Elegy on the Pilot," or framing a strictly personal utterance, as in "For My Girl's Birthday." Surprise is a gratifying element throughout the book. "The Wall-less House" is a poem which shows the difficulty of privacy and the impossibility of escape in our mechanically interwoven lives; yet no reader will be prepared for the incongruously spirited chorus that gives the verse its unexpected but appropriate vigor. Mr. Denney will be praised for his technical innovations, his departures in rhythm, and his experiments in dissonance. But his craftsmanship is less notable than his courage, his modest use of native stuff, his determination to resist superficial observation and easy conclusions. What Mr. Denney finally accepts may be of great value to his career. Meanwhile it is heartening to see an emerging poet who knows what to reject.

*HOMEWARD TO AMERICA. By John Ciardi. New York: Henry Holt & Company. 1940. 62 pp. $1.50.

*THE CONNECTICUT RIVER. By Reuel Denney. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1940. 67 pp. $2.00.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
ONE MAN'S POISON *Cortland Fitzsimmons* (Stokes: $2.)	Cal. poloist and stable boy mysteriously slain. Player's bosom-friend, chief suspect, helps police select killer from lengthy list.	Novel method used in first murder is repeated at climax with startling results. Matches well described and tale moves swiftly.	Standard brand
MURDER THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS *Robert George Dean* (Crime Club: $2.)	Double death in southern newspaper circles solved by carefree operatives of Imperator Schmidt agency.	Tony Hunter bears brunt of heterodox sleuthing with pals Griffith and Macgillicuddy supplying blithely bibulous obbligato.	Frisky
THE SO BLUE MARBLE *Dorothy B. Hughes* (Duell, Sloan & Pearce: $2.)	Document hidden in azure marble causes three deaths which Insp. Tobin of New York force finally pins on totally unsuspected person.	Pair of debonair and diabolical twins—slightly overdrawn—supply quantities of thrills, and yarn has plenty of punch generally.	Out-of-ordinary
MR. POLTON EXPLAINS *R. Austin Freeman* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Self-effacing asst. to renowned Dr. Thorndyke has day in sun and supplies solution to London arson-killing.	Autobiographical beginning slightly tedious but mystery that follows is capital and up to highest Freeman standards.	Excellent

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WHERE AUTHORS BECOME WRITERS

(*Continued from page* 15)

actor does not show that for another it would not have been entirely wrong.

Just at this time messages were being received by producers from that mysterious underground source that I have already referred to, telling of an impending change in the public taste. "What they want is costume plays," came the warning. So with hope born of desperation we turned once more to Cagliostro. We dug him up, hoping to find that life was not extinct. We turned him over and over, stroked him, kicked him, but there was no doubt he was as dead as a doornail. For two weeks we held a post-mortem and then sent him most irreverently to hell. We had a grand character but no story to carry him.

If, in the light of this experience, I ever give on the radio a "Fireside Talk to Writers" I shall say in simple language, "And so, my young friends, when next you write a story, be sure that you have got a story worth writing before you write it. Work out your plot on paper, from beginning to end, and then consider carefully and at length whether it is better to burn the midnight oil developing it, or, my young friends, to burn the story and save the oil."

Someday I should like to give an expensive dinner, in honor of all the writers that have written for me since I came into pictures—that is, during the past ten years—and make it up with them. I should like to assure them that had I been a reader and not an actor I should have had great admiration for their work and should have passed it without change. Indeed, had it been for any other actor I should perhaps have seen no reason to alter it. As a reader I have gone with the times—am quite up-to-date. But the writers were writing for me, the actor; and as an actor—well I am not of royal birth, but I was nurtured in the cradle of Queen Victoria and I have walked hand in hand with Queen Victoria ever since. Very respectable but very stodgy.... But I like it. I like the Victorian playwrights—the good ones. I like their rather obvious polishing of phrases; at any rate, I like it better than the Natural School of Writing, designed for the Natural School of Acting.

I say I should like to give this expensive dinner, and invite the writers. But would they come?

This article is a preview of George Arliss's "My Years at the Studio," which will be published by Little, Brown & Co., Boston.

ANSWERS TO QUIZ No. 10

1. "Idiot's Delight," by Robert Sherwood.
2. "Dead End," by Sidney Kingsley.
3. "Petrified Forest," by Robert Sherwood.
4. "Journey's End," by R. C. Sherriff.
5. "Merton of the Movies," by Kaufman and Connelly.
6. "The Mikado," by Gilbert and Sullivan.
7. "Our Town," by Thornton Wilder.
8. "The Front Page," by Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur.
9. "Seven Keys to Baldpate," by Geo. M. Cohan.
10. "Rain," by John Colton and Clemence Randolph.

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Books into Pictures

BY THOMAS BURTON

WE Americans have a great brooding and occult sense of the past. We still talk of covered wagons and bear hunts and pine-cone clearings and Old Uncle Ned who was scalped at Little Big Horn. Our novelists are alert to our history and have produced a crop of live and virile books in the historical form. But they still lack a coherent maturity of purpose. We have yet to read an American "War and Peace," "The Red and the Black," or a "Henry Esmond." We will. Until such books come along we can be happy with the terrible-tempered Mr. Kenneth Roberts, whose novel, "Northwest Passage," has just reached the screen as a technicolored drama.

Stirring, heroic, colorful, and technically expert, it is a picture of the first part of the book called "Rogers' Rangers." It tells the story of a group of rangers who, in their disheveled anger, travel far and suffer much on a march to burn, murder and wipe out an Indian village. No horror of death, no hunger nor brutal massacre of men, women and children is spared you. There are no bombing planes nor tanks in this picture, but again and again you will suddenly wonder if this isn't the story of Poland or Finland or Ethiopia or Spain. A modern war of harassment. Are the rangers who come looking for "living space" Nazis or Russians or Franco's Moors or the tin-can Caesar's new Romans? The convex countenance of the screen does not say.

The outdoor photography is very wonderful. The skies and forests and lakes in full color have been caught reluctantly by a camera which is too often used indoors with faked and processed shots. Meanwhile we can hope and wait for an American novelist to write a historical novel in which the Indians are the heroes. They *did* have moments of decency and dignity.

I do not know if the "Swiss Family Robinson" was the "Northwest Passage" of its day. I know I read it as a child. I know all my friends read it

Drawing by Neale Iredell
Robert Nathan

with joy and appetite and perhaps the painful premonition that such islands would never come their way. Hollywood made this picture from the popular novel by merely asking the public library what was the most popular book on its shelves. "Swiss Family Robinson" was the winner. I dread to think what would have happened had the libraries reported Anthony Trollope's "Barchester Towers," Sterne's "Tristram Shandy" or "The Boston Cook Book." Not that these would not have made good entertainment—but the camerascript experts would have been a little baffled as to how to put "box office socko" into them. As it is, the motion picture "Swiss Family Robinson" is a bore. Better re-read the book.

When I reviewed John Steinbeck's picture version of "Grapes of Wrath" on these pages a few weeks ago, I called it a great masterpiece of cinema art. Seeing it again, with intense scrutiny, I am doubly convinced. I liked the picture "Grapes of Wrath" because it was honest, intense, powerful. I dislike the Hollywood version of "Of Mice and Men" because it carries over from John Steinbeck's novel of the same name the theatrical and stagey plot of the big dumb guy and small little guy and hokum ending of the little friend's shooting his big friend to save him from the posse. The stupid, sensual puppets are on verbal strings all the time. The dead mice, the breaking of the girl's neck, are bric-a-brac and stage tricks that are missing from "Grapes of Wrath." The thing that pleased me about "Of Mice and Men" was its outdoor camera work. As with "Northwest Passage" the aerial luminous trees and fields and smoke-smudged dwellings are real. Some day perhaps Hollywood will frown on any action that, calling for sky and roads and streets, is shot indoors against glass plates, backdrops and canvas skies and model trains. Nature's grandeur and sublimity cannot come from a drawing board—not when you use a camera as a story teller.

Books That Would Make Interesting Motion Pictures

NO ARMS, NO ARMOUR. By Robert Henriques.

Here is a novel about soldiers, a book whose spirit and detailed description of the life of the army man would make a daring and different kind of motion picture. Written by a man who is an artist with an unswerving fidelity as well as an army man, it tells, with a certain hard-ringing truth, of men and armies and generals. It has the hardness that has been lacking in such literature as "Three Soldiers," "What Price Glory" and "Journey's End"—even "All Quiet on the Western Front." Henriques's book is also a change from the usual blood, mud, lice, and oh-god-how-long-will-this-last war book. Such books, stirring and horrible as they were, have failed to end wars. "No Arms, No Armour" never loses its well-determined mental conception. Perhaps a motion picture about army politics, soldiers' personal problems, their primed and polished traditions, can give us a new viewpoint on war.

★ ★ ★

THE HOSPITAL. By Kenneth Fearing.

This novel of subtle distinctions did not get the readings it should have. As a motion picture it may be too much against the red rubber and ether melodrama of the "Men in White" school. Because the book is honest, has a harmonious balance, tells a great and sincere story, moves with an artist's pacing of time and events, it may start a new trend in hospital pictures. If we must have motion pictures about hospitals, let us have them written by artists like Kenneth Fearing.

★ ★ ★

PORTRAIT OF JENNIE. By Robert Nathan.

I have never cared very much for the soft whimsy of Mr. Nathan's books. They ignore, or faintly brush their old lace wings across the important and dreadful events that are now taking place in this world. But Mr. Nathan has a fine quality of mood and brooding, a mood for humanity groping for graciousness, a sense of timelessness and of character that could do a great deal for the art that is motion pictures. In the hands of a great director his novel would come to life and take shape. His emotions are needed in Hollywood—and I mean that with no backhanded subtlety. The man has great taste.

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The New Books

Fiction

TRISTRAM BLENT. By Henry Barnard Stafford. Coward-McCann, Inc. 1940. 311 *pp.* $2.50.

For desperate missions, writers of historical fiction choose powerfully-built adventurers of few words and varied accomplishments, penniless, true hearted dare-devils, able to wrestle a bear, palm a coin, beat up a gang of pirates with their fists, or win the heart of a colonial governor with their wisdom. Such a one is Tristram Blent who appears in orthodox fashion on page one, slogging alone down an English road in the year 1632 with empty pockets and a high heart, little suspecting that in twenty pages he will be meeting Oliver Cromwell and other historical characters, and in forty that he will be off to New Amsterdam to spy out the Dutch settlements in the interests of Puritan imperialism.

He is followed, of course, by the villain, a sly, cringing rogue with remarkably faint motivation, but it's no trouble at all for such a hero to foil his enemy, outwit the Dutch, escape from the Mohawks (whose admiring affection he has won by skill in prestidigitation, surgery, and gunsmithing, and by John Riddian feats of strength) and to make his way back through trackless forests (guided by the moss on the trees), to the English settlements on the Connecticut. In due time, after slaughtering savages and rescuing a couple of maidens in distress, he brings back to England a full account of the Dutch in America, and an outline of British colonial policy good for the next hundred years, for which he is suitably rewarded with a quarter section of land, and a heroine stuffed with rose petals and sawdust. Admirers of the sturdy tradition of American historical fiction should like this book; it has few surprises. Perhaps the Indians are a little unexpected. They rather suggest Sir James M. Barrie's. But the prose is pure Fenimore Cooper.

G. M.

OUT IN SOCIETY. By Margaret Culkin Banning. Harpers. 1940. 291 *pp.* $2.50.

Wedge is "that nice young grandson of Judge Slade," and Barbara is "that debutante who will get all the Ferratin money." Just this side of the tracks are Dick, a poor boy who has fought his way into the best law firm in the city, and Anne, who led her class at the business college. Everyone assumes that these two couples are admirably matched; but love and Mrs. Banning laugh at the assumptions and dogmas of a society which hasn't even the sense to know that all its certainties are doomed. The predestined partners do not excite each other: it takes Dick to make Barbara feel that life is worth living, and it takes Anne to make Wedge determine to play politics instead of polo. Mixing realism with romance, Mrs. Banning has written a story of love in a time of transition.

K. S.

International

PARLIAMENT. By W. Ivor Jennings. Cambridge: The University Press. (New York: Macmillan.) 1940. 584 *pp., with index,* $6.

Mr. Ivor Jennings's work, "Cabinet Government," is already well-known. The present volume, which surveys Parliamentary activities from the private member to the House of Lords and from the private bill to delegated legislation, is its worthy successor. The section entitled "Behind the Speaker's Chair" is one of the most interesting pieces in the book and indicates its informality of approach. Although Mr. Jennings is a frank optimist about parliamentary democracy and states with un-Marxian confidence "the Government does not wish to act oppressively," as his keynote, this is no stiff apologia.

I am not so sure as Mr. Jennings that all is well in Beulah. As he himself writes, "though in one sense it is true that the House controls the Government, in another and more practical sense the Government controls the House of Commons." In brief, between elections, the party caucus which controls the Cabinet also controls by the aid of the royal prerogative the Lords. It controls the Commons. It controls the king since it has recently been argued that the king must not only, as in Sweden, act on the advice of his ministers but on the advice of his ministers of the moment, without forcing an election. It yet depends, Mr. Jennings would reply, on public opinion. In these days of propaganda one rather notes that the party government can—and does—suspend the Quinquennial Act and postpone elections; and it could constitutionally abolish the Opposition. Effective constitutional checks and balances there are in Britain now none, although there is the safeguard of individual rights and of the principle that the State or Party exists for the individual and not conversely. At this vital point in traditional Lockian theory the present constitution of Britain compares extremely badly with that of the United States. There is indeed one check—common sense. What is common sense—and today where is it?

This book will doubtless be put by the student on his shelf in a row of meritorious textbooks along with Brogan's work on American Government. But the scholar and perhaps the legislator will find an especial and honorable niche for it, while expressing the hope that Dr. Jennings will follow these studies on the legislative and executive instruments of government by one on Public Opinion and its Party Controls in the twentieth century.

G. C.

Records in Review

By Edward Tatnall Canby

THOUGH Kirsten Flagstad has one of the finest voices of our times her real greatness lies in her consummate musicianship. Too often great voices are paired with small brains—incredibly efficient machines which faithfully reproduce the written note with the intelligence of a teletypewriter. But in the midst of the concentrated and abstruse musical thought of *Götterdämmerung* Flagstad sings circles around other Wagnerian sopranos. Victor's recording of her voice, aided by Melchior's, in three Wagner excerpts is surely the most important release of the month. *Tristan: Love Duet, Liebestod; Götterdämmerung: Brunnhilde's Immolation.* V M-644; $10.) The recording of the voices is perfection, and the singers' performance is almost as outstanding as Victor's vivid blurbs suggest. In fact this would be the outstanding set of the year were it not for Victor's tragic and irritating distortion of the balance between solo and orchestra. We hear the singers close enough to be at times unpleasantly breathy, the orchestra as a distant, colorless, emotionless backdrop. This oft-repeated blunder seems to me quite unpardonable. . . . More Debussy, this time *La Mer,* from Boston and Koussevitsky. (V M-643; $6.50). Written some nine years after the three *Orchestral Nocturnes* reviewed last month this music seems closely related to them, yet shows, like *Götterdämmerung* a concentration and intensification of the composer's individuality. It is interesting to note that when first performed this work was attacked as

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incomprehensible. Debussy, along with Beethoven, Wagner, and our own Stravinsky, found his early works acclaimed as masterpieces, each succeeding step towards individuality bitterly condemned as a betrayal of early promise. Koussevitsky's playing is superior to Stokowsky's; hence this set is highly desirable. . . . Leon Goosens records two beautiful works for oboe. The Handel oboe *Concerto in Bb.* (V 12605; $1.50) has been one of my favorite records, in the imported version, since its issue last year. The *Three Romances for Oboe and Piano, op. 94 of Schumann* (C X-160; $3.50) should prove particularly interesting to lovers of that wealth of short pieces—which was certainly his most successful work. There is a good deal of subtlety for Schumann in these Romances, even a certain oriental flavor in the treatment of the oboe; yet they do not suffer from the organic weakness of his longer and more involved works. . . . Beethoven's *String Trio in C minor, op. 9 no. 3* is recorded by the Pasquiers, who still impress me as not particularly inspired. An adequate performance of a particularly meaty "early work." Beethoven wrote trios as a curtain raiser to his attempt at the more difficult quartet form, yet the musical thought in this trio seems to go deeper than that in most of the two dozen-odd movements comprising the op. 18 quartets. . . . Walter Piston's ballet suite *The Incredible Flutist* will appeal to a wider audience than his recently reviewed quartet. In the *Petrouchka* tradition, this music is gentler, more friendly, more reticent than Stravinsky. A series of satirized dances, minuet, tango, spanish waltz, siciliano, polka, show Piston's persuasive sense of rhythm; and a priceless bit of Americana gives the final touch —Arrival of the Circus, complete with cheers, whistles, cat-calls, discordant oom-pah band, and a lone barking dog. . . . More Americana may be found in an album of Revolutionary ballads sung by John and Lucy Allison and an assorted accompaniment of drums, accordion, guitar, and the like. (V P-11; $4.25). Though the music here used is less authentic than the words and the instruments are anachronistic, the net result is surprisingly faithful to the spirit of the ballads, and is musically most satisfying. A useful booklet gives the historical background of each ballad. Recommended highly for school work in American History, as well as for the amusement of the grown-ups. . . . Though not the piece I had expected it to be, the two-piano arrangement of Bach's aria *Sheep May Safely Graze* ("Birthday Cantata") is beautifully played by Bartlett and Robertson, (C 69818-D $1.50) and should prove attractive to worshippers of Myra Hess's *Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring.* Obverse is not too successful transcription of a lively sinfonia from Handel's *Solomon.*

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77-G		78-R	79-P	80-J		81-V	82-I	83-C		84-N	85-U	86-I	87-O	88-V		89-R	90-B
	91-C	92-I	93-L		94-Q	95-P	96-U	97-R	98-H		99-W	100-D	101-B		102-E	103-S	
104-K	105-B	106-J	107-U	108-G		109-V	110-P	111-I	112-C	113-M	114-E	115-F	116-W	117-D	118-S	119-K	120-X
	121-L	122-P	123-H	124-O	125-G	126-A		127-A	128-W	129-H		130-M	131-B	132-L	133-S		134-F
135-B		136-J	137-X	138-W	139-N	140-S	141-R	142-L	143-H		144-N	145-K	146-Q	147-J	148-G	149-E	150-A
	151-X	152-G	153-R		154-J	155-G		156-V	157-X	158-C		159-Q	160-B	161-L	162-E		163-Q
164-T	165-S	166-J	167-G		168-O	169-R	170-S	171-P		172-I	173-T	174-D	175-C	176-V	177-K		178-U
179-P	180-F	181-I	182-O		183-L	184-S	185-D	186-J	187-K								

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-four words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1938 edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 12 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. German composer (1895—).
B. Pretentious display (comp.)
C. Merciful.
D. Tending to excite mirth.
E. Excess of resources over liabilities to creditors (2 wds.)
F. Sluggish.
G. Tree symbolizing the universe (Norse).
H. 15th century mystery plays.
I. Last part of course.
J. Precursor of tuba.
K. Lyrical forms of French origin.
L. Spends the summer.
M. Old-womanish.
N. Calms, quiets.
O. Theoretical.
P. English actor and dramatist (1635?-1710).
Q. Buries.
R. Incessant repetition of theme with contrapuntal accompaniment (Mus.)
S. Serving lads.
T. Tree with red berries.
U. Significant tones.
V. Bickers, cavils.
W. American dramatist (1891-1939).
X. Jehovah.

WORDS

	33	1	18	126	48	150	29	127	55	
	101	66	131	105	160	135	90			
	112	22	83	175	158	2	91			
	100	174	117	62	185	28	36			
	6	24	102	32	149	114	162	60		
	40	134	72	115	180	67				
	167	108	19	148	125	3	155	152	77	42
	37	63	123	53	129	143	98	10		
	82	15	31	86	181	7	35	111	49	172 92
	11	136	38	154	186	166	56	106	80	147
	145	21	177	74	187	119	104			
	93	161	121	73	183	142	26	52	132	
	113	69	27	130	51					
	75	84	14	8	144	12	23	46	139	
	76	45	124	87	182	168	17	25		
	47	179	65	171	34	110	95	122	79	
	68	163	159	5	57	30	146	94		
	89	153	54	58	141	78	97	169		
	13	103	133	170	184	140	165	118		
	9	173	50	164	44					
	96	4	20	85	107	61	178			
	109	39	81	156	71	64	176	59	88	
	128	116	99	41	138	70				
	120	43	157	16	137	151				

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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

The Paradox of Columbus

His birthplace is in question—was he native Genoese,
Or Catalan, or Spanish Jew, or even Portuguese?
His name is what you make it—Columbus or Colon
Or any one of several he may have claimed his own;
His past is most uncertain and his motives most unclear;
He won his fame by finding what he didn't know was here;
He never saw America; he never reached Cathay;
And yet his grip on history grows stronger every day.

—DOROTHY BROWN THOMPSON

APROPOS Mrs. Thompson's verses, we note that C. S. Forester's new book, announced for summer by Little, Brown, has Columbus as its hero. ☞We are hoping that Margaret Armstrong's *Trelawny,* forthcoming from Macmillan, will revive interest in one of the most remarkable books ever written, and quite unknown to the newer generation, *The Adventures of a Younger Son.* We were introduced to it as a college boy and made it our own in the admirable little Bohn's Library series, which were the Modern Libraries of pre-war youths.

★ ★

☞Memories are weirdly short in the book business. The good success of Mortimer Adler's *How to Read a Book* reminds us that we have never been able to strike a spark by mentioning the late J. B. Kerfoot's *How to Read,* published about 1916. Even its own publishers have forgotten they ever issued it. We often wonder what became of our copy, it would bear rereading. ☞N. E. Vogel, of Oak Lane Country Day School (Philadelphia), has checked up the list of 131 great books given in *How to Read a Book,* and reports that 90 are in *Everyman,* 48 in *Modern Library,* 33 in the *World's Classics.*

★ ★

☞We look forward with interest to Arthur Morgan's biography of Edward Bellamy, the author of *Looking Backward.* ☞The American Autograph Shop (Merion, Pa.), believes that Abraham Lincoln's premonitory dream of tragic death, which he recorded on April 11, 1843, took place at Tremont, Tazewell County, Illinois.

★ ★

☞Old Q. always celebrates the equinoxes in his own way: this time he ratified the new season by buying a book at Mendoza's on Ann Street (an old Tabard Inn Library copy too, in memory of his prime) and revisiting McSorley's saloon for ale, and the more swanky bar uptown where Maxfield Parrish's famous painting of Old King Cole now hangs. ☞He wonders how many readers remember when it was at the Knickerbocker Bar and every young provincial who came to town went there first; then to the Haymarket, Little Hungary, and the old Waldorf.

★ ★

☞It's always odd to think that many booksellers imagine themselves downtrodden helots, when they actually have in hand the most powerful instrument of human accomplishment—advance knowledge. They can read, if they care to, the world's most carefully considered thinking weeks or even months before it is made public. ☞What would not financiers, or milliners, or any kind of tycoon, give for that privilege? It's queer how few booksellers make use of it. ☞As we have said before, Thinking Tomorrow's Thoughts Today is one kind of Future Life.

★ ★

☞The third season of the summer school conducted by Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Aiken will be held at South Dennis, Mass. The Aikens will accept not more than six resident pupils for informal instruction in writing and painting. ☞Alfred Kreymborg, poet and critic, is conducting classes in creative writing at his home, 54 Charles Street, New York City. ☞The problem of atlas publishers, whether four colors of ink are sufficient in printing maps (so that all tangent subdivisions will be colored differently) is interestingly analyzed by Philip Franklin in *Scripta Mathematica.* The proof seems to go as far as this, that all maps of 35 or fewer subdivisions can be done in 4 colors without confusion. ☞Charles E. Tuttle Co., booksellers in Rutland, Vt., since 1832, remark that the activity of winter skiers has kept things lively in the hills, so that they "braved the chill of their stock rooms" and issued a catalogue of Americana. ☞Bill Colescott of the Franklin Bookshop, Philadelphia, says they will publish in April Dr. Alfred P. Lee's checklist of books and pamphlets by the Caliph A. Edward Newton, and will send copies on request.

★ ★

☞We were saddened to learn of the death of Norman MacDonald, author of *The Orchid Hunters* (Farrar & Rinehart), whom we had known since he was a college boy in Hawaii. After a jack-of-all-trades experience during the Depression years, MacDonald and his friend MacKay discovered orchid-hunting in South America as their guest for where the blue begins; it was one of his letters in this *Review* that started the publisher's interest in a possible book. Norman had all the pluck and charm of his Scottish inheritance; his death is a tragic loss.

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